

AL-QAIDA'S (MIS)ADVENTURES IN THE HORN OF AFRICA



HARMONY PROJECT

COMBATING TERRORISM CENTER
AT WEST POINT



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Foreword

*The United States will continue to lead an expansive international effort in pursuit of a two-pronged vision: 1) The defeat of violent extremism as a threat to our way of life as a free and open society; and 2) The creation of a global environment inhospitable to violent extremists and all who support them.*¹

— President Bush September 2006

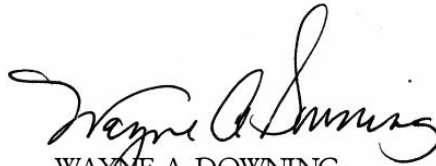
In February 2006, the Combating Terrorism Center released *Harmony and Disharmony: Exploiting al-Qa'ida's Organizational Vulnerabilities*. Its authors analyzed declassified internal al-Qa'ida documents captured during operations in support of the Global War on Terror and maintained on the Department of Defense's Harmony Database. These declassified documents, which are corroborated by multiple open source materials, provide evidence that al-Qa'ida struggles with many of the same issues and challenges that all organizations in the private and public sectors confront. The Combating Terrorism Center recommended that effective strategies to defeat al-Qa'ida and likeminded groups should include measures that leverage and heighten their dysfunctional structure, competition, and behavior.

In *Al-Qa'ida's (Mis)Adventures in the Horn of Africa*, the Combating Terrorism Center's team of area experts and terrorism scholars analyzed al-Qa'ida's attempts to establish bases of operations and recruit followers in the Horn of Africa. According to a new set of recently declassified documents from the Harmony Database, al-Qa'ida operatives encountered significant problems as they ventured into the foreign lands of the Horn. The environment was far more inhospitable than they anticipated. The same conditions that make it difficult, or in many cases impossible, for state authorities to exert control in this region—poor infrastructure, scarce resources, competition with tribal and other local authority structures—were significant problems for al-Qa'ida as well.

The theories and case evidence presented in this report indicate that the second part of the President's vision—creating a global environment inhospitable to extremists and their supporters—can be well served by recognizing, understanding, and reinforcing local and regional suspicions and often outright hostility to an unknown group of foreign, religious extremists. As the report's authors argue, we should neither assume that al-Qa'ida's members are any more adept at operating in foreign countries than we are nor should we inflate the appeal of their rhetoric or the resonance of their extremist ideology. In Africa, the U.S. and al-Qa'ida are in an ideological struggle and experience similar advantages and disadvantages; however, the U.S. has more (but not unlimited) resources and options at its disposal. The key is to efficiently apply these resources in a manner that is appropriate, sustainable, and does not strengthen al-Qa'ida's appeal. Crucial to this effort is a low-to-invisible American profile in the region. The report's specific recommendations—informed by al-Qa'ida's internal deliberations and formulated by counterterrorism practitioners and area experts—are a major contribution to this end.

¹ *National Security Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, September 2006; <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nsct/2006/>

Sun Tzu warns that, “He who attempts to defend everywhere defends nowhere”; yet this is largely the challenge that confronts us in our current worldwide struggle against radical Islamist Jihadis. This report draws on the lessons learned from al-Qa’ida’s experiences in the Horn to focus U.S. resources on those areas with the largest payoff in order to more efficiently allocate our scarce resources so that this country can sustain this generational struggle.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Wayne A. Downing". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Wayne" being more prominent than the last name "Downing".

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The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and not of the U.S. Military Academy, the Department of the Army or any other agency of the U.S. Government.

Executive Summary

During the early 1990s, al-Qa'ida was beginning to coalesce as an organization, honing its operational techniques and dealing with its first internal conflicts. Its private deliberations during this period are revealed by a trove of documents captured in the course of operations supporting the Global War on Terror and maintained in the Department of Defense's Harmony Database. *Al-Qa'ida's (Mis)Adventures in the Horn of Africa*, by the Combating Terrorism Center (CTC) at West Point, draws on recently declassified Harmony documents, predominately from the 1992-1994 time period, original field work by CTC personnel and careful country studies to enrich our understanding of the terrorist group's early successes and failures in the Horn of Africa.

The Horn provides the backdrop for an intriguing tale of al-Qa'ida's first efforts to expand beyond Afghanistan and Sudan. As recounted by its leaders and operatives, al-Qa'ida's efforts to establish a presence in this region and use it as a base for attacks against Western targets elsewhere were largely a failure. Conventional wisdom suggests that Somalia, a failed state, would be an ideal safe haven for al-Qa'ida. Our analysis, however, indicates that weakly governed regions such as coastal Kenya, not failed states like Somalia, provide an environment more conducive to al-Qa'ida's activities. In Somalia, al-Qa'ida's members fell victim to many of the same challenges that plague Western interventions in the Horn. They were prone to extortion and betrayal, found themselves trapped in the middle of incomprehensible (to them) clan conflicts, faced suspicion from the indigenous population, had to overcome significant logistical constraints and were subject to the constant risk of Western military interdiction.

In Kenya, by contrast, the state's poor governance, combined with relative stability and basic infrastructure, created a potential base area from which to support operations in more unstable regions like Somalia and a favorable operational environment to attack lucrative targets within Kenya. More importantly, outside military forces could not conduct operations because of Kenyan sovereignty, yet the state had little ability to interdict the terror group's actions or effectively police its activities. Evidence from Harmony, open sources and recent in-country interviews support these conclusions. Based on this analysis, we believe coastal Kenya is the decisive arena in the fight against al-Qa'ida and associated movements in the Horn. More generally, our analysis shows that weakly governed states—not failed ones—provide the optimal operational environment for al-Qa'ida and similar terrorist organizations.

This report assesses al-Qa'ida's operations in the Horn of Africa using a similar approach to *Harmony and Disharmony: Exploiting al-Qa'ida's Organizational Vulnerabilities*, the CTC's first report based on the Harmony documents. We identify the organizational challenges al-Qa'ida faced in managing the jihad in the Horn. We also examine the individual motivations of the Somali clans and people that largely resisted al-Qa'ida's recruitment efforts in the region. Our most important new finding is that al-Qa'ida failed to gain traction in Somalia in the early 1990s because: (1) its members were perceived as foreigners; (2) it significantly underestimated the costs of operating in a failed state environment; and (3) its African vanguard did not understand the salience of

either local power structures or local Islamic traditions. In a region dominated by clan-based authority structures and moderate Sufi Islam, the benefits of joining a foreign Salafi terrorist organization paled next to the costs of leaving one's clan.

After reviewing al-Qa`ida's Horn operations from a theoretical standpoint, we analyze al-Qa`ida's prospects in two key Horn countries: Somalia and Kenya. The nations composing the Horn of Africa are often aggregated into one overall counterterrorism strategy. However, each Horn country and even sub-regions within these countries present a unique set of socioeconomic, political and religious factors that create specific challenges and opportunities to both al-Qa'ida and to counterterrorism forces. Effective and efficient counterterrorism efforts in the Horn require tailored strategies that exacerbate the endemic challenges that al-Qa'ida encounters in this inhospitable region and minimize friendly government vulnerabilities.

We conclude this study by identifying concepts and techniques that may be applicable in other regions based upon al-Qa'ida's experiences in the Horn. Our primary conclusion is that the U.S. and its coalition partners should prioritize counterterrorism efforts on weak states—not failed ones. Both types of states demand attention but require different policy solutions. Effective and sustainable counterterrorism in failed states requires engaging with sub-state authorities to give them the means and the motivation to resist foreign intrusion. In weak states, successful counterterrorism policies must address core institutional and governance problems that render such states unable or unwilling to fully deal with the threat. Perversely, U.S. support to state and local counterterrorism efforts can create incentives to tolerate low levels of terrorism, a problem best addressed by conditioning aid on counterterrorism effort rather than on the presence of a threat.

To ensure Somalia remains an inhospitable location for foreign terrorists, we suggest four principles that should guide counterterrorism policy: (1) prevent the creation of a Somali state based on jihadi ideology, in part by leveraging the divisions between Somalis and foreign jihadis created by differences in Islamic ideology; (2) selectively empower local authority structures; (3) publicize the elitist nature of al-Qa'ida fighters and their disrespect for Somalis; and (4) maintain the capacity to interdict high value al-Qa'ida targets and provide humanitarian support, but minimize foreign military presence on the ground in the region.

In the past, al-Qa'ida has sought to draw the U.S. into entanglements where it can bleed the U.S.'s military and economic resources. In Somalia, al-Qa'ida encountered an entanglement of its own. Policy makers must understand how places like Somalia—where al-Qa'ida became plagued by clan conflicts and excessive operational costs—provide opportunities to employ an economy-of-force strategy whereby U.S. forces contain and monitor al-Qa'ida. This graduated containment approach to dealing with Somalia and other failed states would build rings of security around the failed state through diplomatic engagement with nation-states and local authority structures, increased military capability within states and economic development.

To reduce the attractiveness of Kenya as a venue for terrorist activity, U.S. policy should seek to implement the following measures: (1) focus on coastal Kenya where al-Qa'ida finds a Muslim populace that is distrustful of the central government and is tolerant of al-Qa'ida's ideology; (2) use targeted aid to raise al-Qa'ida's operating costs in at-risk areas; (3) support non-governmental organizations and inter-governmental organizations promoting democratic values among Muslim political parties and candidates in order to provide an ideological counter-weight to jihadi appeals; (4) subsidize efforts to address non-terrorism concerns, such as property crime and poor health care, in order to bolster government legitimacy and increase citizens' willingness to work with government on security issues; and (5) realign counterterrorism funding such that it increases state capacity without creating incentives for the Kenyan government to tolerate low levels of terrorism.

Given the Horn of Africa's history as a venue for terrorist attacks, and its potential value as a base area for jihadi operations, continued vigilance is required. By focusing efforts on weak states, working through local allies at the lowest possible level and supporting institutional reforms that eliminate incentives to tolerate low levels of terrorism, policy makers can efficiently ensure a greater threat does not develop in this important region.

Part II of the report provides summaries and full English translations of the twenty-seven recently declassified Harmony documents used in the study. The translated documents and the complete, un-translated originals are accessible at <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/aq.asp>. Key authors of these Harmony documents and terrorist groups operating in the Horn are profiled in the Appendices.

Work for this project contributes to the CTC's mission to prepare current and future leaders to better understand and respond to the terrorist threats facing our nation. As part of the Department of Social Sciences at the U.S. Military Academy, research conducted by the CTC faculty and staff is integrated into the Academy's curriculum and supports outreach efforts to inform military and civilian leaders engaged in formulating and executing counterterrorism policies. Please direct specific questions on this report or the CTC's Harmony Project in general to Clint Watts, CTC Executive Officer, or LTC Joe Felter, CTC Director. They can be reached by email at clinton.watts@usma.edu, or phone: 845-938-8495.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	i
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Foreword	iii
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Part I

1. Introduction: al-Qa'ida's Operational Plan in the Horn of Africa	1
2. Theoretical Framework: The Challenges of Weak and Failed States	9
3. Case Study: Somalia	29
4. Case Study: Kenya	47
5. Conclusion: Key Issues and Policy Recommendations	63

Appendices to Part I

Appendix A: Case studies of regional terrorist groups	75
I. Al-Ittihad al-Islami (AIAI)	77
II. Eritrean Islamic Jihad (EJIM)	83
Appendix B: Cast of Characters from the Horn of Africa	87
I. Abdullah Muhammed Fazul	89
II. Abu Hafs al-Masri	107
III. Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys	113
IV. Saif al-Adel	119
IV. Lesser Members/Affiliates of al-Qa'ida	131
a. Aden Hashi Fara Ayro	
b. Gouled Hasan Dourad	
c. Abu Talha al-Sudani	
Appendix C: Notes and Interviews from Kenya	135
I: Notes on Ras Kiamboni	137
II: Sample of Kenyan Muslim views	143
III: Confession of Omar Said Omar	147
IV: Written Statement of Mombasa Muslim Leaders	169

Part II

Introduction to the Harmony Database and Ongoing Efforts	173
Harmony Document List and Summaries	175

1. Introduction

The Horn of Africa has been an important area of operations for al-Qa'ida and the jihadi movement¹ since the early 1990s. Recent information campaigns by Ayman al-Zawahiri and other jihadis demonstrate al-Qa'ida's desire to make Somalia a new front for jihadis to face off against the West. For example, in early 2007, Zawahiri called for attacks on Ethiopian forces in Somalia using "ambushes, mines, raids and martyrdom-seeking raids to devour them as the lions devour their prey," which strongly suggests that al-Qa'ida desires to use the Horn as a theater of operations.² The degree to which al-Qa'ida has actually established a foothold in the region—and why—is the subject of significant debate among analysts and policy makers. Much of this debate has focused on the potential threat from terrorism in the region, without paying sufficient attention to the operational challenges al-Qa'ida and other groups have faced when operating in the Horn. Taking these challenges into account, we find that in this region al-Qa'ida has been moderately successful when operating in weak states like Kenya but has largely failed to establish itself in failed states like Somalia.

To better understand al-Qa'ida's successes and failures in the Horn of Africa, we analyze and incorporate information from 27 newly declassified internal al-Qa'ida documents related to the region. These documents were captured during operations in support of the Global War on Terror and are maintained in the Department of Defense's Harmony Database. The vast majority of these documents provide detailed accounts of al-Qa'ida's efforts in Somalia between 1992 and 1994. This report builds on the theoretical framework presented in the CTC's study, *Harmony and Disharmony: Exploiting al-Qa'ida's Organizational Vulnerabilities*,³ and provides recommendations for effective counterterrorism policies informed by these new insights into al-Qa'ida's early operations. We begin the report by developing a theoretical lens to assess terrorist operations in this region and in general. Next we present case studies that assess al-Qa'ida's operations in Somalia and Kenya—both of which have experienced significant al-Qa'ida activities, and whose unique local conditions each presented the terrorist network with a different set of underlying challenges and opportunities. Al-Qa'ida's successes and failures in the context of these African states have significant implications for developing more effective methods to reduce the threat of transnational terrorism in both weakly governed states and failed states, in this region or wherever similar governance conditions exist.

Our approach to understanding the threat of terrorism in the Horn of Africa is to carefully analyze the tasks that terrorists must accomplish and ask how the situation in the Horn makes these tasks easier or harder. Our starting point is that terrorist

¹ We use the term as it is widely used in both the Western counterterrorism community and the Arab media. See William McCants, *Militant Ideology Atlas* (West Point, NY: U.S. Military Academy, 2006), 5.

² Ayman al-Zawahiri audio tape, January 5, 2007. See translation at "Al Zawahiri Audio Urges Somalis, Muslims to Fight Ethiopian Forces," *What Extremists Say*, U.S. Central Command. Available at <http://www.centcom.mil/sites/uscentcom1/What%20Extremists%20Say/Al-ZawahiriAudioUrgesSomalis,MuslimsToFightEthiopianForces2.aspx> [accessed 25 February 2007].

³ *Harmony and Disharmony: Exploiting al-Qa'ida's Organizational Vulnerabilities* (West Point, NY: U.S. Military Academy, 2006). Available at <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/aq.asp>.

organizations may seek to use the Horn of Africa in two ways. First, they may use it as a place from which to operate, as a base of support. Here we can think of how al-Qa'ida used Khartoum as a place to maintain training camps and to conduct fundraising enterprises from 1992 to 1996, or of the al-Qa'ida militants who sought refuge in Somalia after the fall of the Taliban regime.⁴ Second, they may use the Horn as a theater of operations. Al-Qa'ida did this in 1998 when it attacked American embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam and again in 2002 when it attacked the Paradise Hotel and a jet leaving the Moi International Airport in Kenya.

Because a core constraint facing all terrorist organizations is maintaining an acceptable level of security, the different types of environmental conditions and government capacity within the Horn mean the threat from terrorism varies dramatically across the region. For example, areas such as Nairobi may be safe-albeit-expensive places for terrorists to engage in logistical tasks, but mounting terror attacks there may be relatively challenging to the extent that the Kenyan government decides to crack down.⁵ In contrast, areas like Lu'uq in Somalia may be weakly governed, and hence a good place to locate military training camps, but the infrastructure is so poor that logistical challenges essentially eliminate the area's military utility.⁶ Moreover, the lack of a strong central Somali government means that regional enemies have free rein to engage in cross-border military operations.⁷

To date, the details of terrorist operations in the Horn of Africa have been largely misunderstood. The Harmony documents in this study outline al-Qa'ida's operational environment in the early 1990s and suggest that common assumptions about the Horn as an operational environment and base of support are largely mistaken. In particular, the anarchic conditions in Somalia that many believe serve al-Qa'ida's purposes turned out to be as challenging for al-Qa'ida as for the Western organizations seeking to help Somalia. Al-Qa'ida's experiences in Somalia and Kenya illustrate the underlying conditions that have made the Horn of Africa more or less suitable for al-Qa'ida. In these two Horn countries, we find significant al-Qa'ida activity over the past fifteen years, as illustrated in the documents from the Harmony database. However, each exhibits a different mix of al-Qa'ida activity, government capacity and counterterrorism response. While al-Qa'ida has operated elsewhere in the Horn, our case studies of these two countries—supported by new evidence from the Harmony database—yield strikingly different conclusions from conventional thinking on the region.

⁴ The Sudanese government laid out the welcome mat for a wide variety of Islamic militants in the first half of the 1990s, leading the U.S. State Department to designate Sudan a state sponsor of terrorism in August 1993. However, as soon as Sudan began to face real costs for its support of militancy—following the failed June 1995 assassination attempt against Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak—its leaders became very careful about which groups they would support, avoiding links with transnational groups. In recent years Sudan has been applauded by the State Department for its cooperative stance against transnational terrorists despite once being the global headquarters for al-Qa'ida.

⁵ On surveillance of Arabs in Nairobi making operations difficult see Harmony, AFGP-2002-800597, 7.

⁶ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600104, 5.

⁷ Ethiopia effectively crushed the Islamic Union of Western Somalia (*al-Ittihad al-Islami*, or AIAI) in a series of raids from August 1996 through January 1997 against bases in Lu'uq and Buulo Haawa; see International Crisis Group, *Somalia's Islamists*, Africa Report No. 100 (Nairobi and Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2005), 9. Available at <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3830&l=1>.

For example, a number of analysts have argued that al-Qa'ida has deep, long-standing ties to Islamic militants in Somalia and could draw on these ties to use Somalia as a staging ground for further attacks.⁸ Chapter 3 of this report disputes that conclusion. Both the Harmony documents and recent journalistic and academic research suggest that the links are actually quite tenuous. Within Somalia, a failed state allegedly ideal for terrorist organizations, al-Qa'ida struggled to build a coalition in 1993-1994. Moreover, al-Qa'ida had little success forging alliances with local militias in Somalia⁹ and its involvement in attacks against Western forces in Somalia was tangential at best.¹⁰ Finally, foreign militants operating in Somalia are exposed to constant risk of detention and arrest by Western counterterrorism efforts.¹¹ Our analysis, informed by the documents from the Harmony database, reveals that while Somalia provided occasional passage and temporary refuge to al-Qa'ida, the country's lawlessness and isolation—which many cite as ideal for al-Qa'ida's efforts—were seen by the group as constraining their ability to create a secure base for operations.

In contrast to Somalia, analysts assessing the threat of terrorism in Kenya often portray it as being smaller than it truly is. Kenyan counterterrorism efforts, supported by generous Western assistance, have been at best ineffective and at worst counter-productive. In Kenya, a democratic nation with relatively weak counterterrorism capacity, al-Qa'ida operatives moved freely into Somalia during the early 1990s, conducted attacks against the U.S. Embassy in 1998 and continued to launch attacks against Western targets as late as 2002. Despite extensive U.S. support for countering al-Qa'ida within the country, Kenyan efforts have likely increased the alienation of the country's minority Muslim community, while Western aid has done little to increase popular confidence in the Kenyan authorities—especially given the economic and political conditions in their country. Taken together, these circumstances suggest that Kenyans are more likely to ignore foreign terrorists operating in their midst. Moreover, we find a pernicious pattern in Kenya. For the population, the threat of terrorism is a low priority relative to other security concerns. For the government, having some alleged terrorist activity in Kenya brings substantial Western military assistance that may outweigh the costs in terms of lost tourist revenue. In Chapter 4, we examine how this unique situation makes crafting effective counterterrorism policy extremely problematic for the U.S. government.

Our theoretical framework and case studies support a number of conclusions and policy recommendations for fighting terrorism in the Horn of Africa as well as globally.

⁸ A typical example is James Phillips, "Somalia and al-Qaeda: Implications for the War on Terrorism," *Backgrounder* no. 1526 (Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation, 2002). Available at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/HomelandDefense/BG1526.cfm>.

⁹ Chapter 3, below, discusses this problem at length.

¹⁰ Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 188-9.

¹¹ *Counter-Terrorism in Somalia: Losing Hearts and Minds?*, Africa Report No. 95 (Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2005), 9-13. This otherwise excellent report includes some odd conclusions about the potential for Somalia as a staging ground for terrorism elsewhere. The report argues that "Somalia's lack of a functioning central government, unpatrolled borders, and unregulated arms markets make it a useful platform for actions aimed at foreign interests elsewhere in the region." (*Counter-Terrorism in Somalia*, 6) This conclusion does not follow from the facts presented in the report, which details the myriad problems jihadi terrorists have faced in Somalia.

In Chapter 5, we discuss several different approaches that Western nations might use in dealing with failed and weak states. Our analysis suggests that weak states, not failed ones, provide the greatest potential terrorism threat. In weak states, groups like al-Qa'ida find a target-rich environment where they are protected from Western counterterrorism efforts and yet not significantly interdicted by the state's law enforcement and intelligence apparatus. Meanwhile, in failed states like Somalia, al-Qa'ida suffers from logistical constraints, a hostile set of clans and other local powers and relatively unrestricted Western counterterrorism efforts. Our analysis thus reveals the peculiarities of the weak-versus-failed state dynamic and suggests a host of political, economic and military techniques that might be used in the Horn of Africa and globally to deny al-Qa'ida safe haven.

The appendices of the report provide valuable additional details on specific terrorists and terrorist groups active in the Horn. Throughout the study, we make use of newly declassified documents from the Harmony database. These documents support and deepen the observations provided in our theoretical and case study sections. Part II of this report contains summaries and English translations of these newly declassified documents, which can inform future research and provide more insight into al-Qa'ida's weaknesses as well as methods for exploiting these shortcomings.

The Africa Corps: al-Qa'ida's Operations in the Horn of Africa

The Horn of Africa presents the U.S. and its coalition partners with a diverse set of regional and country-specific challenges. Understanding the threat from terrorists operating in the Horn requires an appreciation of how terrorists' core organizational challenges play out in light of the peculiar history of the region. For more than 40 years, the Horn has been plagued by strife and conflict. Civil wars in Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan have been compounded by several interstate wars between Ethiopia and Somalia (the 1977-1978 Ogaden War) and between Ethiopia and Eritrea (the 1998-2000 border war). Additionally, understanding the terrorist threat to this region is made more challenging by the numerous insurgent organizations that have been created to fight as proxy armies or have arisen to represent the interests of various populations.¹² Many of these organizations have shifted ideologically over the years, moving from nationalism to Marxism-Leninism to Islamism. In the Horn, by and large, groups like the Eritrean People's Liberation Forces (EPLF) choose their ideology to maximize the flow of outside resources—thereby maximizing their chances for military success in the name of larger political goals. Thus, what appears to be a Salafi-jihadi organization committed to supporting attacks against the West may in fact be a localized insurgent group seeking to wrap themselves in an ideological mantle to secure funds from wealthy foreign militants.

This backdrop—as well as the varying levels of government control and government corruption that exists throughout the region—creates unique challenges for both Western governments and al-Qa'ida in the Horn of Africa. The Harmony documents provided in Part II of this report describe al-Qa'ida in its infancy and in its first

¹² For a useful summary of competing local interests see International Crisis Group, *Somalia: The Tough Part is Ahead*, Africa Briefing No. 45(Nairobi and Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2007), 4-6. Available at <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4630&l=1>.

operational theater. In 1992, Osama bin Laden moved his operations to Sudan and immediately initiated a series of business developments in and around Khartoum.¹³ Within months, bin Laden had deployed cadres of operatives into the Horn of Africa in an effort to spread Salafism and the doctrine of jihad, but al-Qa'ida's Africa Corps ultimately failed to create a lasting front on the continent. The challenges of logistics, distance and culture that have undermined many foreign endeavors into rural Africa plagued al-Qa'ida's operations as well. By 1996, bin Laden and his Africa Corps had been run out of Sudan and were headed back to Afghanistan.¹⁴

The Harmony documents made available for this project provide a glimpse into the operational planning of the Africa Corps and specifically their efforts in Somalia. Although bin Laden's initial activities in Sudan were focused on military training and business ventures in the Horn, he was infuriated with the continuing presence of U.S. military forces in the "holy land" of Saudi Arabia and could not remain a mere Khartoum businessman. By the end of 1992, he began openly discussing the issue of U.S. troops in Somalia. Together with his religious advisor, Mamdouh Salim (aka Abu Hajer al-Iraqi), bin Laden began a campaign to recast the "far enemy" of Islam as the United States. With the fall of the communist regime of the Soviet Union, he and Salim turned their sights on the United States as the main international thief of Muslim oil wealth, occupier of the holy land and embodiment of corrupt Western values.¹⁵ Unable to operate in Saudi Arabia, al-Qa'ida turned to Somalia as a possible base from which to strike the Americans and drive them out of the Middle East.¹⁶ From Khartoum, al-Qa'ida deployed teams of operatives led by senior members with experience in military operations, logistics, religion, propaganda and negotiation. The Africa Corps, led by Mohammed Atef (aka Abu Hafs), ventured into Somalia with high hopes for jihad and redemption.¹⁷

The mission of what we will call al-Qa'ida-Somalia began in late-January 1993 when Abu Hafs designated a team of veterans to conduct operation "MSK" (an Arabic word meaning 'holding' or 'grabbing'). These veterans immediately began preparing for deployment to Africa. Beginning on 4 February 1993, al-Qa'ida members departed for Nairobi, Kenya. Abu Hafs tasked them to: "1- Find a location for military operations that would replace Afghanistan.... 2- [T]he location must be near the Arab region.... 3- [A]ttempt to help the brothers in Somalia and Ogaden."¹⁸ Al-Qa'ida believed that Somalia would provide another safe haven for their operations, allow them to target the U.S. in both Somalia and the Arabian Peninsula and provide a steady flow of recruits. None of these hopes came to fruition.

As described in the Harmony documents, the first elements of al-Qa'ida-Somalia departed from Peshawar, Pakistan through Kenya en route to Somalia on 4 February 1993. The group behaved much like a traditional special-forces operation. The initial group of twelve senior al-Qa'ida operatives was broken into two- and three-man teams

¹³ See Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 165.

¹⁴ Ibid., 219-222.

¹⁵ Ibid., 170-175.

¹⁶ The first al-Qa'ida attack was in December 1992 against U.S. troops in Yemen who were traveling to Somalia.

¹⁷ See Appendix B-II.

¹⁸ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600104, 1.

for the mission. Prior to departing, the teams went through intensive training, learning how to blend into their future environment, reviewing travel and transportation procedures and preparing for reconnaissance operations. Upon arriving in country, al-Qa'ida-Somalia began establishing three training camps with the agreement of the General Islamic Union, the Somali militant group better known as al-Ittihad al-Islami (AIAI).¹⁹ The first two camps were established in Lu'uq and Bussaso, and a third was established later in the Ogaden region. In Nairobi, al-Qa'ida's ominously named "Team Green," led by Saif al-Islam, received new members from bases of operation in Pakistan and Sudan.²⁰ Al-Qa'ida-Somalia used an air infiltration route from Wilson Airport in Nairobi,²¹ a water route from Lamu, Kenya, and at some point an overland route from Djibouti across the Ethiopian Ogaden region.²² Al-Qa'ida's Africa Corps operations appear to have been headquartered in Khartoum from 1993-1994. Cells operating in the region maintained communications with personnel in camps in Afghanistan as well.²³

The Harmony documents reveal that over a roughly 18 month period, al-Qa'ida found more adversity than success in Somalia. In order to project power, al-Qa'ida needed to be able to promote its ideology, gain an operational safe haven, manipulate underlying conditions to secure popular support and have adequate financing for continued operations. It achieved none of these objectives.

In pursuit of its first objective, al-Qa'ida-Somalia tried to promote its ideology through propaganda and by establishing administrative offices in each military training program. However, the Salafi message largely fell on deaf ears. While the military training was of value to members of AIAI, it did not ensure their loyalty to the greater jihadi movement. Al-Qa'ida-Somalia likewise failed to achieve its second objective as it faced constant security headaches in the seemingly anarchic environment of clan-dominated Somalia. Making matters worse, the challenges of long, insecure lines of logistics seriously hampered operations. Gaining local support was no easier. At one point al-Qa'ida operatives were so frustrated that they listed going after clan leaders as the second priority for jihad after expelling Western forces.²⁴ Internal discussions identify the lack of adequate communication equipment as an obstacle to building a coalition among Somalia's diverse Muslim clans.²⁵ Finally, insufficient financing ultimately made operations impossible to sustain on a long-term basis.²⁶

Al-Qa'ida's failures in Somalia and elsewhere in the region are every bit as instructive as its tragic successes in Kenya. Weak states in this region provided terrorists with much greater opportunities than failed states. This pattern suggests that key adjustments to counterterrorism policy are in order at both the strategic and operational

¹⁹ See Appendix A-I for more in-depth background on AIAI.

²⁰ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600104, 2-4.

²¹ This facility is used primarily for small aircraft for local and regional flights, including tourist charters.

²² Harmony, AFGP-2002-600113, 1-3.

²³ See Harmony, AFGP-2002-800081, which shows the routes that al-Qa'ida members took to South Asia.

²⁴ Harmony, AFGP-2002-800600, 2.

²⁵ The next chapter discusses the underlying conditions that worked to the disadvantage of al-Qa'ida throughout their campaign in the Horn.

²⁶ For detailed accounts of Somali training camps, refer specifically to Harmony documents AFGP-2002-600053, AFGP-2002-600104, AFGP-2002-800597 and AFGP-2002-800640.

levels. At the strategic level, security assistance should focus on improving counterterrorism and governance in weak states, not on bringing order to failed states. At the operational level, engaging with local allies, often non-state actors, may very efficiently deny terrorists the use of ungoverned regions. Our careful examination of al-Qa'ida operations in the Horn, informed by internal documents that provide a window into the group's thinking, suggests that the Horn was a very difficult place for al-Qa'ida to operate.

In the following chapter, we explain why the Horn was such a difficult environment for al-Qa'ida, drawing on key insights gained from the group's internal documents and our previous analysis of organizational weaknesses in terrorist groups. We then use case studies of Somalia and Kenya to understand both al-Qa'ida's past experiences in this region and the prospects for future jihadi operation in Somalia, Kenya and the rest of the Horn. Finally, we develop a set of options for policy-makers seeking to ensure that the Horn and similar regions remain inhospitable to transnational terrorists.



Figure 1. The Horn of Africa

2. The Challenges of Weak and Failed States

Weak and failed states present important policy challenges to both terrorists and governments. Failed states offer two potential advantages to terrorist groups. First, they may provide a safe haven for hierarchical systems that ease terrorists' core organizational problems. Second, the economic conditions that accompany state failure may create a favorable labor market for recruiting militants. The challenge for terrorists is that these advantages do not exist in all failed states. Despite the group's high expectations, operating in the Horn of Africa provided neither advantage to al-Qa'ida. On the government side, the challenge lies in getting weak states to spend scarce resources on counterterrorism. The challenge is not simply that governments in weak states may prefer to spend money on economic development or traditional military activities; it is that such governments can have strong incentives to maintain at least some level of terrorism in their country.

This chapter provides a theoretical perspective for understanding how to make the policy challenges harder for terrorists and easier for government. Section I outlines the core organizational challenges for terrorists. Section II shows why failed states may not be very helpful for solving these. Section III uses a labor economics perspective to examine why terrorists expect failed states to be a good recruiting ground. Section IV details why Somalia was not a good place for al-Qa'ida to recruit. Section V analyzes the problem of motivating weak states to take terrorism as seriously as Western governments would like.

I. Organizing Terror

Terrorists' core organizational task is simple to describe: the controlled application of violence in the service of political goals. Hitting the wrong targets, or conducting too many attacks, can be just as damaging to the group's political cause as doing too little.¹ The organizational challenge is that leaders need to work with others to conduct attacks, raise funds, and spread their ideological message. This creates a classic agency relationship in which the principal, the political or ideological leader, sets the goals and delegates operational activities to agents, the rank-and-file terrorists, to achieve these goals.² Working directly with operational elements is dangerous for obvious reasons and is simply not feasible if a group wants to conduct more than a few operations at a time or operations over a wide area.

¹ Examples of counter-productive attacks abound. Indeed, there is evidence that members of al-Qa'ida considered the 9/11 attacks to have been counter-productive. See for example the June 2002 Al Adl Letter from the first Harmony report.

² This does not assume any particular level of formalization. An individual motivated by video tapes of Osama bin Laden and who operates outside of any formal organization is still Osama's agent. Likewise, an individual operating under the command of Seamus Twomey in the quasi-military hierarchy of the Belfast Brigade of the Provisional Irish Republican Army (P-IRA) in August 1971 is still the agent of the P-IRA leadership council. The key difference is that Osama bin Laden has much less ability to monitor and control his agent. On the P-IRA see Patrick Bishop and Eamonn Mallie, *The Provisional IRA* (London: Corgi, 1994), 171.

The problem with delegation for terrorists is that there are a host of reasons that the rank-and-file will want to do things differently than leaders might like. Essentially, the preferences of the agents will differ from those of the principals. Scholars who have done extensive interview work with terrorists report their organizations are torn by strife and disagreement.³ Supporting this view, the Harmony documents are full of sometimes vitriolic letters flying back and forth as members of al-Qa'ida debate ideology, strategy, and tactics.⁴ Even when there is no conflict within groups, leaders often engage in costly efforts to monitor their agents, suggesting the potential for disagreement exists.⁵

Historically, the most prominent cause of disagreements between leaders and their agents is the correlation between preferences over violence and skill at conducting violent actions. Simply put, those who are effective at conducting attacks often want to do more violence than is politically optimal. Marxist organizations such as the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party had regular problems in the 1890s and 1900s with local cells conducting revenge attacks that could not be justified by Marxist theory.⁶ In like fashion, the Provisional IRA suffered repeated problems with Active Service Units (ASU), made up of combat specialists, pushing for violence when the organization as a whole wanted to limit attacks.⁷ As we'll see later, a similar problem creates headaches today for leaders among the foreign elements of the Iraqi insurgency.⁸

Unless their political goals are truly transcendent, terrorist leaders would like to exercise some control over their agents, but doing so is problematic. Controlling the lower levels of an organization entails two tasks: (1) monitoring agents, so that undesirable behavior is detected; and (2) punishing them for not behaving as principals would like. Both of these present specific challenges for terrorist organizations. Monitoring reduces leaders' security because it entails additional communications and creates links between leaders and those most likely to be identified and captured by government. Moreover, the nature of the task means leaders can't monitor perfectly even if they want. Lastly, there is a huge random component in whether or not an attack succeeds. Leaders watching a cell have an inherent difficulty in figuring out if the cell

³ See for example J. Bowyer Bell, "Aspects of the Dragonworld: Covert Communications and the Rebel Ecosystem," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 3:1 (Spring 1989): 15-43; Colin Crawford, *Inside the UDA: Volunteers and Violence* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2003).

⁴ Hassan al-Tajiki's Third Letter to the Africa Corps is typical. Hassan writes, "Here once again I remind you of one of your fatal mistakes, which is the quick changing of strategic targets, whereby now every action is tactical and improvised." Harmony, AFGP-2002-600053, 25.

⁵ For example, some leaders in Jemaah Islamiyah required members to report their travel expenses in order to know if there was any corruption. That they never had problems with corruption could mean agents did not have different preference from the leaders, or that the monitoring deterred corruption. Author interview, Jakarta, February 20, 2007. We also see this reporting in Africa. See Harmony, AFGP-2002-800573.

⁶ Anna Geifman, *Thou Shalt Kill: Revolutionary Terrorism in Russia, 1894-1917* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 49-50; Anna Geifman, "Aspects of Early Twentieth-Century Russian Terrorism: The Socialist-Revolutionary Combat Organization," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 4, no. 2 (1992): 28-29.

⁷ Bishop and Mallie, *op. cit.*, 203; M.L.R. Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish Republican Movement* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 120-121.

⁸ Excessive violence at the operational level is a problem for senior leaders in al-Qa'ida in Mesopotamia. In 2005 they instructed a cell operating in Ramadi to be more careful in whom they kill or else "[the] people will start fighting us in the streets." Harmony, IZ-060316-02.

failed because it was not operating faithfully – perhaps because the member in charge of logistics was misappropriating resources⁹ – or because government got lucky.¹⁰ Even when leaders can monitor, punishment is costly because the agents whom leaders want to control wield two threats over the leadership. First, they are specialists in violence. They can attack the leadership. Davie Ervine, a former bomb maker for the Ulster Volunteer Force, a loyalist paramilitary, described the problem as follows: “In a military organization, the Admiral doesn’t have to worry about the sailor getting off watch and shooting him. My admiral did have that concern.”¹¹ Second, members unhappy with their punishment can go to the government. Jamal Ahmed Al Fadl who testified in the Africa Embassy bombings case followed this path. He had stolen money from al-Qa’ida, got caught, went on the run, and approached the U.S. government asking to join the witness protection program.¹²

Mechanisms that minimize preference divergence are costly and may create security risks for them.¹³ For example, many groups use screening strategies to mitigate the preference divergence which creates agency problems. Here leaders require prospective members to participate in time-consuming or dangerous initiation rites, such as demanding that recruits engage in lengthy ideological debates.¹⁴ Essentially, time-consuming debates make the costs of participation too high for anyone not extremely committed to the cause.¹⁵ However, Iraqi insurgent recruiting manuals warn, this strategy can weed out people with useful skills who have neither the patience for lengthy doctrinal debates nor the education to participate in them.¹⁶ Other screening strategies include

⁹ A problem for al-Qa’ida in Afghanistan. See Harmony, AFGP-2002-800581.

¹⁰ This kind of measurement problem is a motivation for vertical integration in business firms. The organizational implications of this kind of uncertainty for terrorist financial systems is explored in Jacob N. Shapiro and David A. Siegel, “Underfunding in Terrorist Organizations,” *International Studies Quarterly* 51 (2007): 405-429.

¹¹ Author interview, March 8, 2006.

¹² Jane Mayer, “Junior: The clandestine life of America’s top Al Qaeda source,” *The New Yorker* (September 11, 2006).

¹³ For discussions of the problems inherent in other screening strategies see Joseph Felter *et al.*, *Harmony and Disharmony: Exploiting Al-Qa’ida’s Organizational Vulnerabilities* (West Point N.Y.: United States Military Academy, 2006). See also Jacob N. Shapiro, “The Terrorist’s Challenge: Security, Efficiency, Control,” Manuscript, Stanford University, 2006; and Jacob N. Shapiro, “Terrorist Organizations’ Vulnerabilities and Inefficiencies: A Rational Choice Perspective,” in Harold A. Trinkunas and Jeanne K. Giraldo, eds. *Terrorist Financing and State Responses: A Comparative Perspective* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007).

¹⁴ Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat (GSPC), an Algerian terrorist organization, uses just such a recruitment system in expatriate Algerian communities in France. See Mohamed Sifaoui’s journalistic account of his penetration of a GSPC fundraising and recruiting cell in Paris, in, *Inside Al-Qa’ida: How I Infiltrated the World’s Deadliest Terrorist Organization* (New York: Thunder’s Mouth Press, 2003).

¹⁵ For a discussion of how education serves as a similar screening mechanism for business firms see A. M. Spence, “Job Market Signaling,” *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 87 (1973): 355.

¹⁶ Of course, as one Yemeni militant notes, groups do need some members who are educated to carry out effective operations. Harmony, AFGP-2002-800517, 37. On Iraq see Harmony, ISGZ-2004-M1000074-0148. A related problem experienced by Russian Marxist terrorist organizations is the frequent need to lower standards of ideological purity in order to bring in more recruits. Doing so increases the frequency of counterproductive actions and reduces security by bringing people into the group who are susceptible to monetary inducements from government agents. See Geifman, *Thou Shalt Kill*, 160-162.

requiring prospective members to attend arduous training camps or demanding they commit violent acts to prove their allegiance to the group.¹⁷ Unfortunately for terrorist groups, both of these strategies create predicate offenses that make it more likely that law enforcement officials will identify operatives.

Taking these organizational challenges into account makes it clear that terrorist groups and other covert organizations face two fundamental trade-offs. The first is between operational security and operational control. Here agency problems and other group dynamics lead to counterproductive violence. Strategies to mitigate these problems through greater control entail security costs for groups as a whole. The second trade-off is between security and financial efficiency. Here problems of trust and control—agency problems—create inefficiencies in resource allocation. Strategies to mitigate these problems all entail security costs.

At the most basic level, this analysis presumes that organizations configure themselves and operate in ways that seek to maximize their utility given their cognitive constraints and limited information about the world.¹⁸ At a minimum, we assume terrorist organizations, or at least their leaders, intend to be rational in their decision making.¹⁹ For business firms, such rationality usually means attempting to maximize utility measured in terms of profit. For terrorist organizations, political impact is the goal. As this perspective suggests, we see many examples of terrorist organizations struggling to find the appropriate means, in terms of targets and organizational structures, to meet their political ends.²⁰

¹⁷ On al-Qa'ida's use of training camps as a screening mechanism see "Testimony of FBI Agent John Anticev on Odeh," *United States of America v. Usama bin Laden, et al.*, 5 (7) 98 Cr. 1023, 27 February 2001, 1630-1638. On the logic behind requiring members to commit violent acts see Sun-Ki Chai, "An Organizational Economics Theory of Antigovernment Violence," *Comparative Politics* 26:1 (1993).

¹⁸ Recent research by Scott Atran and others shows that the most committed terrorists - failed suicide bombers - exhibit the minimum requirement for this type of rationalist approach ("consistent transitive preferences") when discussing how to achieve their ends. However, they demonstrate irrational, "intransitive preferences" when discussing the morality of their chosen method or the theological justifications for their ends. Since this paper is concerned here with organizations making adjustments to achieve exogenously defined goals, Atran's results suggest the analysis rests on solid behavioral grounds. Scott Atran, "The Moral Logic and Growth of Martyrdom: Instrumental Reasoning vs. Sacred Values," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, St. Louis, Feb. 19, 2006.

¹⁹ Terrorist organizations clearly make many decisions in a rational fashion. When one type of attack becomes more difficult, terrorists switch to another type and the baseline rate of attacks remains relatively consistent. Most evidence suggests terrorist leaders demonstrate exactly the kind of consequentialist logic required for intendedly rational behavior. On substitution effects see Walter Enders and Todd, "Patterns of Transnational Terrorism, 1970-1999: Alternative Time-Series Estimates" *International Studies Quarterly* 46 (2002):145-65. On consequentialist decision making in al-Qa'ida, see many examples in Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002). On rational reactions to political competition between terrorist groups, see Mia M. Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005). On terrorist decision-making more generally, see Gordon H. McCormick, "Terrorist Decision Making," *Annual Review of Political Science* 6 (2003): 473-507.

²⁰ For a lengthy example of such analysis, see Abu Bakr Naji, *The Management of Savagery*, trans. William McCants (West Point, N.Y.: Combating Terrorism Center, 2006). For an analysis of terrorist groups'

With this basic rational choice-theory approach in mind, we can identify conditions under which groups will prefer to exercise central control over operations or finances. If these conditions exist, groups face agency losses but must balance their desire for control against the security costs it entails.

The security-control trade-off becomes especially challenging when:

- Preferences over tactics are not perfectly aligned, so that some agents want to attack different targets or want to conduct more or fewer attacks than leaders want.²¹
- It is costly to monitor agents' tactical planning or use violence to condition them.²²
- Leaders' political goals are being placed at risk by the freelancing of operational elements.

The security-efficiency trade-off becomes especially challenging when:

- Agents below the leadership are less than perfectly committed.²³
- Principals cannot perfectly monitor their agents' uses of money or punish them for observed infractions.
- Resources are sufficiently constrained that leaders won't just accept the financial inefficiencies created by agency problems.

Both trade-offs are minimized to the extent that terrorist organizations have a place where they can build the kinds of hierarchical structures that traditional organizations use to solve agency problems. Al-Qa'ida tried to use Afghanistan for this purpose from the mid-1990s through late 2001, just as the P-IRA used the Republic of Ireland as a safe haven until the mid-1990s.²⁴ Captured documents and public web

intendedly rational choice of organizational structures, see Jacob N. Shapiro, "Organizing Terror," manuscript, Stanford University, 2006.

²¹ This can occur for two reasons: (1) because operatives have different preferences over violence than leaders; or (2) because leaders and their operatives receive different information about the appropriate targets.

²² It's important to keep in mind that the costs to monitoring/punishment don't just arise from government action. The need to maintain cohesion within groups can also limit leaders' options. Again quoting Davie Ervine: "We had some really heinous, counter-productive stuff going on. But we couldn't put a stop to it because we needed to keep the hearts and minds within the organization." Author interview, March 8, 2006.

²³ The agents can have the exact same preferences as the leaders, but the leaders have a problem unless everyone below them is perfectly committed. No matter what their preferences are between spending on attacks and allocating resources to salaries or other private goods, leaders want every cent passed down allocated to achieving political impact, often through violent operations.

²⁴ Just how far they moved towards having functioning hierarchical structures is a matter of debate, but the Harmony data show a clear intent to move in that direction. On al-Qa'ida's use of Afghanistan see Felter, *Harmony and Disharmony*, 9, 37. See also Shapiro, "The Terrorist's Challenge," 4. On the P-IRA, note the group's use of the border counties for military training and indoctrination from the 1970s onwards. See also Shapiro, "Organizing Terror," 23.

postings demonstrate that al-Qa'ida has been thinking about the necessity to exploit such weakly-governed spaces since their organizational founding. The importance of safe havens is evident in the documents where jihadi commanders argue for the need to preserve strong, secure rear areas in places like Sudan and Afghanistan while launching offensive strikes into Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.²⁵ In the context of the theoretical framework presented here, the existence of usable security vacuums greatly eases groups' organizational trade-offs. If there is a safe rear area for the hierarchy, then exercising a given level of control has much smaller security implications.

II. Failed states: an (un)safe haven for terrorists.

Do failed states actually serve as an effective safe haven for terrorists? There are a number of reasons to suspect not. In the first place, areas without functioning state institutions do not provide safety for their residents. The security vacuum creates problems for the terrorists too.²⁶ As a result, terrorist strategists do not think such spaces are very useful.²⁷ Here two documents are instructive. The first, from Somalia, identifies a five-point strategy to unite Somali forces and create an Islamic national front.²⁸ The author argues for: (1) expulsion of the foreign international presence; (2) rebuilding of state institutions; (3) establishment of domestic security; (4) comprehensive national reconciliation; and (5) economic reform and combating famine. This approach parallels that of the June 2005 Zawahiri letter addressed to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in Iraq.²⁹ In that letter, Zawahiri argues that jihad in Iraq should proceed incrementally, according to the following phases: (1) expel the Americans from Iraq; (2) establish an Islamic authority or emirate, then develop it and support it; and (3) extend the jihad wave to the secular countries neighboring Iraq.

Notice that what is important to these thinkers is not the existence of a security vacuum but what comes next: establishing functioning state institutions under jihadi control.³⁰ What made Afghanistan so useful to al-Qa'ida from 1995 onwards was not an absence of state institutions; it was that al-Qa'ida could operate under the protection of a sovereign state, relying on that state's sovereignty to shield its infrastructure from potential attack by Western forces. Operating in a security vacuum, where training camps and the like can be more readily attacked directly by the United States and indirectly by local allies, is much less attractive.³¹ In fact, existing security vacuums have not proven

²⁵ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600053.

²⁶ In a series of reports from Somalia in the 1990s, Mohammed Atef (also known as Abu Hafs) details the challenges of operating in a failed state. Prominent among these are problems with local bandits, the costs of corruption in neighboring states, and the ability of Western forces to act in ungoverned spaces. See Harmony, AFGP-2002-600104, AFGP-2002-600110, and AFGP-2002-800597.

²⁷ For a thorough development of this argument by a very influential jihadi thinker, see Abu Bakr Naji, *The Management of Savagery*, trans. William McCants (West Point, NY: Combating Terrorism Center, 2006).

²⁸ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600053, 6.

²⁹ Available online at: http://www.dni.gov/release_letter_101105.html [accessed April 27, 2006].

³⁰ A similar argument is made in Naji, *The Management of Savagery*. The core argument there is that the jihadi movement should win public support by showing it can manage state institutions and provide public goods such as order and contract enforcement more effectively than secular governments.

³¹ For example, in 1996 Ethiopian forces entered Somalia to conduct an offensive against Islamist forces in the Gedo region. In the same year the Ethiopians used a local proxy force, the Secularist National Front, to take a number of towns where foreigners had been operating. Harmony, AFGP-2002-600110, 1-2.

to be a viable base for exporting attacks abroad. No major international attacks have been supported out of Afghanistan, Iraq, or Somalia since the US military operations began in 2001. From this perspective, policy-makers should be concerned with ungoverned spaces only so far as they are allowing terrorists to operate openly and at reasonable expense.

The Horn of Africa does not afford terrorists such benefits. The Harmony documents reveal four problems al-Qa'ida and like-minded groups have had operating in the Horn. The first problem was that the lack of government-enforced order in many areas imposed what was effectively a tax on all operations. This tax came in two forms: (1) the need to provide security against local bandits,³² and (2) the increased cost of getting personnel and resources into poorly governed areas.³³ The second problem was the unreliability of local allies.³⁴ The third problem was that the better an area was for training, the more remote and sparsely populated it was and thus the harder it was to meet basic sustenance needs.³⁵ The fourth problem was the challenge of getting fiscal resources in place. Financial services in the region were and continue to be weak, and groups did not seem able to effectively use the *hawaladars* who provide key financial services in weakly governed areas of the Horn.

In fact, these problems were so bad that after visiting the training camps his personnel established in Lu'uq, Somalia, Abu Hafs writes back to his superiors and suggests:

“We found out that it is difficult to do this in the areas that we visited because of dangers pertaining to security. This is why it is preferred that the courses be done by you in Khartoum. As a result this will save us transportation expenses and others.”³⁶

As we will see in our country study of Somalia, there is little reason to think this region has become any more hospitable to jihadis since Abu Hafs rendered his judgment. So while the Horn should remain an area of concern, the implication is not that Western governments must take on the impossible task of preventing ungoverned spaces from emerging throughout the region. That would take immense resources and might produce unintended benefits rather than costs for terror groups.

³² In August 1994, Saif al-Islam writes a journal of his trip to Somalia to establish training camps on behalf of Abu Hafs, a senior al-Qa'ida military leader. Saif describes how it took a caravan of 80 local men to guard 8 Arabs on the trip through the Ogaden region to Lu'uq, Somalia. Harmony, AFGP-2002-600104, 4.

³³ In fact, the logistical challenges of moving from Kenya into Somalia were so great that in January 1994 al-Qa'ida operative Saif al-Adel suggested buying a boat for transportation and to raise funds through fishing. The biggest challenge he notes is that because the local can't be trusted, the group will have to train one of their own as a sailor. Harmony, AFGP-2002-600114, 1-2. Harmony, AFGP-2002-600053, 5.

³⁴ Harmony, AFGP-2002-800640.

³⁵ For a description of some of the challenges of operating in Somalia see AFGP-2002-600104, 5. On the problems of moving during the rainy season in areas with few paved roads, see AFGP-2002-600114, 5. In a March 1993 letter to “Brother Othman,” Saif al-Islam describes the poor food in camps in the Ogaden, camps whose major expenditure was on food. Harmony, AFGP-2002-800621, 4.

³⁶ Harmony, AFGP-2002-800597.

Denying terrorists the benefits of ungoverned spaces in the Horn is a much more feasible strategy. The massive troop deployment in Iraq has so far denied terrorists the use of that country as a staging ground for attacks in the West. Meanwhile, terrorists are denied the benefits of a potential Afghan security vacuum with the deployment there of only 22,000 troops. A mere 1,600 troops based in Djibouti, Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), have effectively denied Islamic terrorists the use of Somalia and the rest of the Horn of Africa.³⁷ In all three cases, these deployments are far less resource-intensive than would be required to actually impose government or support effective control by a central government. A more cost-effective strategy is thus to maintain the capability to act decisively when necessary while cultivating local allies who will monitor these spaces. Such a strategy prevents ungoverned spaces from easing terrorists' fundamental organizational challenges.

III. Why Terrorists Choose Failed States: A Labor Economics Perspective

In the first release of Harmony documents, we found that al-Qa'ida faced a familiar set of organizational challenges, leading to a trade-off between operational security and control of outlying agents acting on behalf of the organization. This perspective helped explain problems within the organization. However, it provided limited leverage for understanding why the organization made particular strategic choices, like trying to establish operations in the Horn of Africa. A labor economics perspective can be useful here in explaining why al-Qa'ida ventured into the Horn and why it faced such difficulties recruiting there despite poor economic conditions.

We can think of al-Qa'ida as a firm that produces terrorism against Western nations, specifically the United States.³⁸ Attacks require a combination of two factors of production: capital and labor.³⁹ For al-Qa'ida, capital includes durable goods like weapons and vehicles, training facilities, and the good will of local governments like Somali clans or the governments of Sudan and Afghanistan.⁴⁰ Labor is the individual terrorist recruits who provide services in exchange for wages and non-pecuniary compensation.

Just as firms locate themselves where they can minimize costs and maximize production and profits, terrorist groups choose operational venues in an essentially

³⁷ Ken Menkhaus, *Somalia: State Collapse and the Threat of Terrorism* (Routledge, 2004).

³⁸ Wright's *The Looming Tower* provides a very effective discussion of the evolution of al-Qa'ida's strategic doctrine, including the relevant importance of attacks on Western targets versus providing militants to fight in defense of Islamic communities.

³⁹ In traditional firms, capital includes "inventory (stock) of a plant, equipment, and other (generally durable) productive resources held by a business firm, an individual, or some other organization." William J. Baumol and Alan S. Binder, *Economics: Principle and Policy*, 9th ed. (Mason, OH: South-Western, 2003).

⁴⁰ Sometimes the connection is very clear. A cornerstone of al-Qa'ida's operations in Sudan was the establishment of business endeavors to finance operations and earn the support of local leaders. Upon arrival in Khartoum, Sudan in 1992, Osama Bin Laden quickly established himself as a businessman as much as a terrorist leader. He invested heavily in the construction and agriculture industry and became "a generous employer by Sudanese standards, paying \$200 per month to most of his workers, with senior managers making from \$1,000 to \$1,500." Wright, *The Looming Tower*, p. 168.

rational fashion.⁴¹ The Horn of Africa presented important production advantages for al-Qa'ida. The Sudanese government provided safe harbor for operational planning, thus easing security concerns. Additionally, the Sudanese economy was very weak in the early 1990s, so labor was cheap. Bin Laden hired more than five hundred people in Sudan and “those employees who were actual members of Al-Qaeda received a monthly bonus between \$50 and \$120.”⁴² The Horn of Africa also presented al-Qa'ida with opportunities to strike against the United States. Bin Laden, still angered by the “continued presence of American troops in Saudi Arabia,” felt compelled to take action against American forces that were present in Somalia as part of a UN Peacekeeping mission.⁴³ Al-Qa'ida leaders also thought Somalia would present a good environment in which to produce attacks against the U.S. and continue to grow its movement. They expected security costs to be low because of the lack of a central government and, on account of the pervasive poverty, they looked forward to a large pool of recruits. Neither expectation was met.⁴⁴

Al-Qa'ida's reasons for venturing into the HOA appear obvious. However, analysts and pundits rarely reverse the question and attempt to determine whether individuals from the Horn of Africa would want to be part of al-Qa'ida and the broader Salafi-jihadi movement. In Somalia, those with the skills for militancy are in demand as the lack of a central government has led to a proliferation of militias. In this competitive labor market, al-Qa'ida had to provide a competitive compensation package to attract good recruits. While the average Somali's economic prospects were, and still are, undoubtedly very bad, it is not clear that this was true for those who would make good terrorist recruits.

Following the labor economics perspective, we assume individuals decide to work as terrorists based on a perceived level of compensation consisting of wages and intangible benefits.⁴⁵ When the compensation for joining the jihad exceeds that of the next best option, individuals join.⁴⁶ In the first set of Harmony documents, we found al-Qa'ida in the 1990s had clearly outlined its compensation package, understanding it had to provide wages to recruit and maintain its work force. These pecuniary benefits are stated outright in al-Qa'ida's employment contract where “the salary of a married Mujahed is 6500 Pakistani Rupee, and 500 Rupee for every newborn ... [and] the salary of the bachelor Mujahed is 1000 Pakistani Rupee.” Total compensation for an al-Qa'ida member included in-kind benefits, such as vacations, as well as wages. The group's

⁴¹ For example, the Provisional Irish Republican Army (P-IRA) in the 1970s chose rural, less populated areas of the Republic of Ireland for training operations. When a P-IRA training officer was captured with documents describing training facilities in County Galway and County Mayo, the groups leaders decided to move training in the Republic of Ireland to County Kerry and to prohibit other activities in that area. Sean O'Callaghan, *The Informer* (London: Bantam Press, 1998), 97-99.

⁴² Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 169.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ There is an important point here; terrorist organizations have a limited ability to understand their operational environment, even when they are operating as openly as al-Qa'ida in the early 1990s.

⁴⁵ Robert G. Ehrenberg and Robert S. Smith, *Modern Labor Economics: Theory and Public Policy*, 9th ed. (Boston: Pearson/Addison Wesley, 2006), 170.

⁴⁶ This perspective is consistent with the enlistment process described in Marc Sageman's *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004). The over-educated, under-employed, socially-isolated ex-patriots that became involved in al-Qa'ida and its affiliates are people for whom the non-pecuniary benefits of terrorism were quite powerful.

contract for new recruits states, “the married have a vacation by rotation for a week every three weeks.... A bachelor can have a vacation by rotation for five days every month.”⁴⁷ Al-Qa’ida also helps its members with consumption smoothing, routinely providing loans to its employees for things ranging from basic necessities to alimony.⁴⁸ The provision of non-salary benefits is not unique to al-Qa’ida. Jemaah Islamiyah, an Indonesian jihadi organization, provides death benefits to its members’ families, but only when they are killed while on assignment for the group.⁴⁹ Terrorist groups compete for labor with both the legitimate economy and with like-minded militant organizations.

Terrorists receive a unique set of non-pecuniary benefits from joining al-Qa’ida, distinguishing it from other militant organizations in the Horn. In particular, al-Qa’ida’s religious doctrines provide members with an attractive set of spiritual benefits. Moreover, relying on these spiritual benefits as part of the compensation package effectively provides a screening mechanism that eases the organizational challenges identified above.⁵⁰ The group’s media campaigns bring the terror recruit a sense of purpose, being part of a team, unparalleled adventure, and often fame. As the organization’s stature increases in recruits’ communities, the non-pecuniary benefits of participating increase, easing the problems of recruiting members.⁵¹ From this perspective, the group’s devotion to create an image as an elite institution is driven as much by the exigencies of the labor market as anything else.

The challenge for groups like al-Qa’ida is that other institutions also provide valued non-pecuniary benefits. Societies in the Horn of Africa present a complex set of overlapping motivations which made al-Qa’ida’s recruitment efforts more difficult than the group anticipated. In many cases, the individual motivations of local Somali residents diverged from the group motivations and core tenets of al-Qa’ida. This meant there was a mismatch between the value of the non-pecuniary compensation package al-Qa’ida thought it was offering and what local Somalis perceived as the benefits to joining al-Qa’ida. The result was poor recruitment and excessive operational costs for the Africa Corps.⁵²

⁴⁷ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600045, 3.

⁴⁸ In the most recent documents, for example, we find what might be a bank document in the U.S., where, “Brother Omar Tajuddin has received the sum of 2,000 Bir to pay his personal debts.” Harmony, AFGP-2002-800573, 21.

⁴⁹ Author interview, Jakarta, February 21, 2007.

⁵⁰ An excellent overview of the economics of religious militancy is presented in Laurence R. Iannaccone and Eli Berman, “Religious extremism: The good, the bad, and the deadly,” *Public Choice* 128 (2006):109-129.

⁵¹ This pattern holds true across groups. In the late 1980s the leaders of the Ulster Defense Association were replaced by younger members unhappy with the old leadership’s focus on lining their own pockets. Once it became known that a new leadership committed to violence against Catholics was in charge, the group began to get more high quality recruits. Crawford, *Inside the UDA*, 157-8.

⁵² The labor economics approach used here is adapted from a larger work. See Clinton Watts, “Jihadi Seeking Challenging Martyrdom Opportunity; Will Travel,” (Working Paper, Combating Terrorism Center, May 2007).

IV. Al-Qa'ida's franchise in Somalia

Analysis tends to focus on whether al-Qa'ida wanted to operate and expand into the Horn of Africa. The information in these documents overwhelmingly supports the notion that it did. Al-Qa'ida leaders like Abu Hafs clearly expected that Somalia would provide a low cost recruiting ground where a disaffected and isolated people would gladly come under the Salafi banner. Al-Qa'ida expected Somalis to join the fight to expel foreign occupiers in the form of the UN peacekeeping mission. In the mind of the al-Qa'ida leadership, Somalia represented a new safe haven for planning and operating terrorist attacks. With little or no functioning government and a poor Muslim populace, Somalia appeared on the surface to be another Afghanistan. Confident from their recruitment success in the Pakistan-Afghan tribal regions, al-Qa'ida ventured into Somalia with mujahideen visions reminiscent of the 1980s.

But reality turned out to be far different from their expectations. Three major themes emerge from our analysis. First, al-Qa'ida leaders greatly underestimated the costs of operating in Somalia. Second, they overestimated the value to Somalis of their version of jihad, of the non-pecuniary benefits they were offering. Labor markets have two sides, supply and demand. On the supply side, we need to ask "Do people from the Horn of Africa want to be part of al-Qa'ida?" It is on this score that al-Qa'ida's expectations and the realities of Somalia diverged in 1993 and 1994. Third, where al-Qa'ida did find success in Somalia, it was by providing local order and not ideological motivation. By providing security, al-Qa'ida fulfilled the functions normally reserved for clan militias.

The difference between al-Qa'ida headquarters' perception and on-the-ground reality is clearly illustrated by the disparity between the guidance from Afghanistan and reports coming from the operational team leaders. In September 1993, Abu al-Waleed writes to Saif al-Islam, his team leader in Somalia, from the Jihad Wal training camp in Afghanistan. He suggests that "the political effort is clearly there and effective ... [and] likewise, the military effort is simple, effective, and inexpensive."⁵³ When Saif has trouble motivating the Somalis during military training, he reports asking them, "don't you want us to come here and do this training in your poor country? You have no [other] opportunities here.... They said yes."⁵⁴ Despite this apparently pleasing response, Abu al-Waleed seems surprised by reports from Saif about materiel shortfalls, commenting, "I learned from your letter that there are very few weapons or ammunition in the area.... I recall when the events began many weapons were readily available and cheap.... Where did they go?"⁵⁵

The low operational costs expected by the Somali franchise never materialized. Abu Hafs, the overall expeditionary leader, repeatedly discusses the high operational costs in Somalia, writing about a "brother" who "is in desperate need for the monies because he did not receive the amount of \$21,600."⁵⁶ These high costs were encountered

⁵³ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600053, 3.

⁵⁴ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600104, 13.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Harmony, AFGP-2002-800597, 9.

within Somalia and en route. Abu Hafs cites Kenya as an expensive route of transit for mujahideen and lists Djibouti as having an “abnormal high cost of living,” where “Brother Khaled has no money ... [and] his debts reached \$4000.”⁵⁷

The documents suggest two reasons for this pattern. First, getting in and out of Somalia was very expensive. Abu Hafs refers to this problem in stating, “the operation pertaining to the transfer of the brothers from Nairobi to Luuq will be costly: \$150 for rent per person, and the roadways are not good.”⁵⁸ The transportation costs for operating in this region were substantial and paralyzing for the Somali franchise. Accounting documents reveal that shipping and transportation costs consumed a vast amount of their resources.⁵⁹ The very reasons that al-Qa’ida sought Somalia- an isolated safe haven for preparing and conducting terrorist operations- also made it nearly impossible to sustain operations.⁶⁰

Second, the poor security environment and unreliable allies effectively imposed a tax on all operations. For example, getting into the Ogaden region of Somalia apparently came at great risk and with large financial costs. Abu Bilal describes movement through this area with an Islamist group: “I was saying to the leader of [the] caravan that the road is dangerous (unintelligible) let us choose another road, and he was saying that all these tribes here are Somali and are sympathetic to us.”⁶¹ Shortly after this discussion, the group becomes engulfed in a roadside ambush. According to Abu Bilal, they ultimately win this skirmish but still sustain casualties. The route from Djibouti through the Ogaden to Somalia proves difficult since the Islamist tribes lack vehicles that can traverse the terrain and they lack “a good and sharp guide of the region.”⁶²

In addition to these shipping costs, the firm sustained continual leakage through extortion from local clans and unintended losses during transportation as convoys and clan movements fell victim to banditry.⁶³ Greed and theft routinely enter the equation, leading Saif al-Islam to bitterly criticize the Somalis:

“...even though the thorny trees I described have sap and gum, no one uses them for anything. All the people there prefer to subsist off wheat and camel milk, and because of this, they are stingy and greedy. There are some stories so you can know about these people, such as the one about the man who left his wife to die of hunger because he wouldn’t slaughter a camel from his herd of more than 100. If they see a caravan of fair skinned-people approaching them, they will welcome them if the caravan looks rich. You would think this is so they can offer the caravan some hospitality, but it is exactly the opposite.”⁶⁴

⁵⁷ Ibid., 11.

⁵⁸ Harmony, AFGP-2002-800597, 10.

⁵⁹ Harmony, AFGP-2002-800621, 4.

⁶⁰ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600104, 17.

⁶¹ Harmony, AFGP-2002-800640, 7.

⁶² Ibid., 6.

⁶³ Harmony, AFGP-2002-800573.

⁶⁴ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600104, 7.

An additional, somewhat surprising expense was incurred because of Somali clan leaders' parochial concerns. Although many Somali clan leaders wanted to expel foreign occupiers, their first goal ultimately was always the security of their clan against local competitors. Abu Hafs routinely runs into difficulties building consensus among Somali leaders to focus on foreign occupiers instead of other Somalis. He has to spend scarce resources to create and maintain alliances between the tribes. Saif al-Islam complains, "we had Abd al-Salam [in the Revolutionary Council], who had taken \$20,000 from Abu Fatima (aka Abu Hafs) on behalf of the council! As for military affairs, they didn't even have any maps with enemy locations and movements."⁶⁵

While the costs for operating in Somalia were greater than expected, the value of al-Qa'ida's compensation package to the locals was much lower than expected. The two major practical benefits al-Qa'ida offered to local allies were money for tribes and military training. The group's accounting records reveal that funding went to expected expenses such as individual salaries, personal loans, and a host of equipment needs such as socks, shoes, dishes, and camels.⁶⁶ Saif al-Islam outlines that meeting basic needs for "every individual will cost \$1.50 daily- \$45 monthly.... [T]herefore the camp force (30) will cost \$13,500 per month."⁶⁷ But operating his camp for three months will cost a minimum of \$130,000, and "this does not cover the administration, media and the tribe's expenses."⁶⁸ Clearly al-Qa'ida had to do more than just offer training; it had to directly pay "tribe's expenses".

Indeed, pecuniary benefits were the anchor for gaining support with the locals. Omar al-Sumali, a.k.a. Saif al-Adl, the expeditionary commander for Ras Kamboni, begs for resources with which to provide pecuniary benefits. He writes, "Give this locality a chance by supporting it financially and supplying good personnel. The potential is very good. We should move very quickly, and seize this opportunity for Jihad. It is a good locality, from which we can establish the expected (base for) work in Somalia."⁶⁹ The idea seems to have been to use pecuniary benefits as a foothold to begin providing the non-pecuniary benefits of Salafism and jihad.

Al-Qa'ida expected it to be quite easy to win the locals with money; after all, their country was poverty-stricken. However, once on the ground, al-Qa'ida's leaders realized that they had competition in Somalia. Their offer of pecuniary benefits bought only temporary commitments from the Somali clans. Even in the unstable environment of early-1990s Somalia, businessmen were a threat to al-Qa'ida's ability to recruit. Saif al-Islam explains how "a man came from Jarbo with money to distribute to the people, especially the tribal Sheikhs.... [H]e said that, 'we don't want political parties in our countries, and weapons either.... Our best interests are not being followed because the Islamic Union is here'."⁷⁰ Saif responds by recalibrating the al-Qa'ida strategy, establishing new "priorities of the jihadist effort: (which is) specify the primary enemy

⁶⁵ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600104, 19.

⁶⁶ Harmony, AFGP-2002-800573.

⁶⁷ Harmony, AFGP-2002-800621, 13.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600113, 7.

⁷⁰ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600104, 21.

(the businessmen), and postpone [efforts against] other groups.”⁷¹ By eliminating business people Saif seeks to reduce the value of the pecuniary benefits he must offer to gain local recruits. Essentially draining an area of all outside financial support is seen as a way to increase al-Qa’ida’s leverage in recruiting individual terrorists and co-opting other groups to their cause. However, the group clearly recognized that to maintain the loyalty of the people, such a strategy must be followed by “supervision of liberated areas and securing of lives, funds, and property of all members of the populace.”⁷²

Once financial benefits gained a foothold, the group planned to use the ideas of Salafism and violent jihad to provide non-monetary motivations for continued support. However, al-Qa’ida encountered unexpected challenges in winning the hearts and minds of Somalis. First, the majority of Somalis are Sufi and not Salafi. Saif al-Islam writes, “this problem [of Sufi vs. Salafist] was beginning to chafe me – I had heard about it before – and the day began in a very unsatisfactory way for me.”⁷³ In Somalia, overtaking traditional Sufi doctrine proved difficult for two reasons. First, the non-pecuniary benefits that Salafism offered did not exceed the tradition older Somalis valued in Sufism. Second, al-Qa’ida’s non-pecuniary membership benefits were less than the costs of leaving one’s clan. Even if they did find value in Salafism, individual recruits found the opportunity cost of leaving their established place in a clan far greater than the benefits of employment with al-Qa’ida. As Abu Bilal describes, “each member of the movement is fanatically attached to his tribe.”⁷⁴ The risks of joining al-Qa’ida were high as a new recruit could not be: (1) certain that he would not be severely punished for leaving the clan; (2) sure that al-Qa’ida would not be overwhelmed by surrounding tribes; nor (3) certain that al-Qa’ida would continue to operate in Somalia for the long term, especially if foreign interventions were eliminated.

In the final analysis, al-Qa’ida’s efforts to move into Somalia fell short for many of the same reasons that Western interventions there failed. Like United Nations and U.S. forces that ventured into Somalia, al-Qa’ida did not understand the political, economic and social dynamics of the country. The costs of this misunderstanding were felt in two ways. First, the lack of any form of governance created excessive operational costs for al-Qa’ida in Somalia. Instead of finding a safe haven like the tribal areas of Pakistan, al-Qa’ida in Somalia found a lawless land of shifting alliances, devoid of Sunni unity. Second, the Somali laborers ultimately placed a lower-than-expected value on the compensation package al-Qa’ida had to offer. The group could not provide benefits sufficient to overcome local loyalties. Although al-Qa’ida was successful in buying their way into a few tribes, the benefits of Salafism in 1993 did not outweigh the cost of tribal exclusion. The primacy of tribalism in Somalia ultimately frustrated al-Qa’ida’s efforts to recruit long term and develop a unified coalition against foreign occupiers. Al-Qa’ida mistook its call for jihad in Afghanistan as a universal motivator for which Muslims in Somalia would join at an equal rate. In 1993 Somalia, this call fell on somewhat deaf ears as survival against local competitors trumped jihad.

⁷¹ Ibid., 23.

⁷² Harmony, AFGP-2002-600053, 3.

⁷³ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600104, 21.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 5.

Al-Qa'ida did find success in certain distinct areas which may provide some clarity for analyzing the threat from foreign terrorists operating in Somalia today. One area where al-Qa'ida was successful was in recruiting some youth away from clans in 1993 and 1994. There are three reasons for this success. First, the call to jihad resonated more with younger individuals seeking adventure. Secondly, the costs for youth to leave the clan were markedly smaller than for more elder individuals. The longer one has been in a tribe or clan, the more benefits, tangible and intangible, the clan member gains from remaining in the tribe. Recognizing the vulnerability of the youth to recruitment techniques, al-Qa'ida sought "to establish a coordination and communications center to connect the youth in the different areas in and out of the country.... [I]t is important to strengthen the unity between the people.... [T]his is very important in Jihad."⁷⁵ Thirdly, successful jihadi operations resonated more with young people. Saif found that after conducting operations, "now many Muslim youth from the surrounding cities want to join up with them [al-Qa'ida in Ras Kamboni]."⁷⁶

More interestingly, in the one area in Somalia where al-Qa'ida may have established an enduring presence, it did so by providing local order. Omar al-Sumali won one village over by providing security and then immediately began ideological efforts. He writes, "we already formulated a political program for the Bajuni and the region ... [and] next week we will ask Sheikh Hassan to adopt the plan."⁷⁷ Al-Qa'ida was apparently able to effectively provide law and order near Ras Kamboni. The Bajuni, a tribal population of the east African coast, residing in the vicinity of Ras Kamboni, actually requested that al-Qa'ida operatives "stay and govern, and secure the city." As Omar al-Sumali explains, the Bajuni:

"...have noticed that the presence of the brothers prevented the highwaymen from entering the city, and the fishermen began coming to the shore to spend the night in the city.... [T]hey told our people that they do not want them to leave. They await the arrival of our wives and children. They freely gave fish to our people, and our people guarded the well while reading the Koran, and helped the fisherman get water."⁷⁸

Today, Ras Kamboni is considered a hotbed of radical Islam and a stronghold of the Islamic Courts Movement. Since 2001, numerous reports suggested that Ras Kamboni served as a terrorist training camp and that jihadis from outside Somalia have taken over the area.⁷⁹ In interviews with Kenyan fishermen, there were people in Ras Kamboni that "were not locals, but rather, Arabs and other more 'European-looking type people' but who were Muslims."⁸⁰ Over the past two years, the Union of Islamic Courts essentially took control of many parts of Somalia due to its ability to provide law and order. The nature of its very name, "Islamic Courts," suggests that the benefits of security may be the foothold that al-Qa'ida can use in an attempt to spread its ideology.

⁷⁵ Harmony, AFGP-2002-800640, 3.

⁷⁶ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600113, 6.

⁷⁷ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600113, 3.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Author interview, Kenyan fisherman, 28 September, 2001. See Appendix C-I.

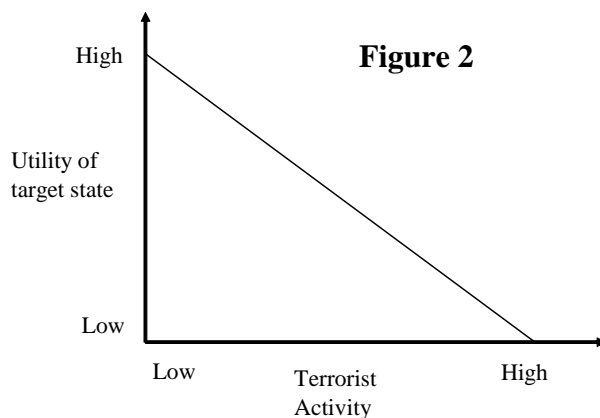
⁸⁰ Ibid.

However, despite the apparent local successes of Islamic militants, the dangers of operating in a failed state were dramatically illustrated during the recent Ethiopian invasion into Somalia. On January 8-10, 2007, American forces conducted a series of air raids on the area around Ras Kamboni in attempt to kill al-Qa'ida operatives seeking sanctuary there.⁸¹ Such attacks are much less likely to occur against operatives working under the umbrella of state sovereignty.

V. Weak states and counterterrorism.

The basic problem faced by developed nations seeking to support counterterrorism in weakly governed states is that these weak states often derive benefits and positive externalities from tolerating some degree of terrorist activity within their borders. The overall utility for weak states is not always reduced as the level of terrorism decreases. This leads to an agency problem similar to that faced by terrorist leaders.

In an ideal world, donor and recipient states would strictly prefer less terrorist activity to more, thus deriving the highest level of utility when no terrorism exists and incrementally less as terror levels increase. The utility curve for this hypothetical state is depicted in Figure 2.⁸²



This relationship seems intuitive. Terrorism and the reputation for being at risk for terrorism inflict serious costs on a state. Domestic sources of terror can destabilize the government, call into question its legitimacy, and degrade its ability to govern effectively. Terrorists inflict casualties on civilians and the members of the military, police and internal security forces trying to

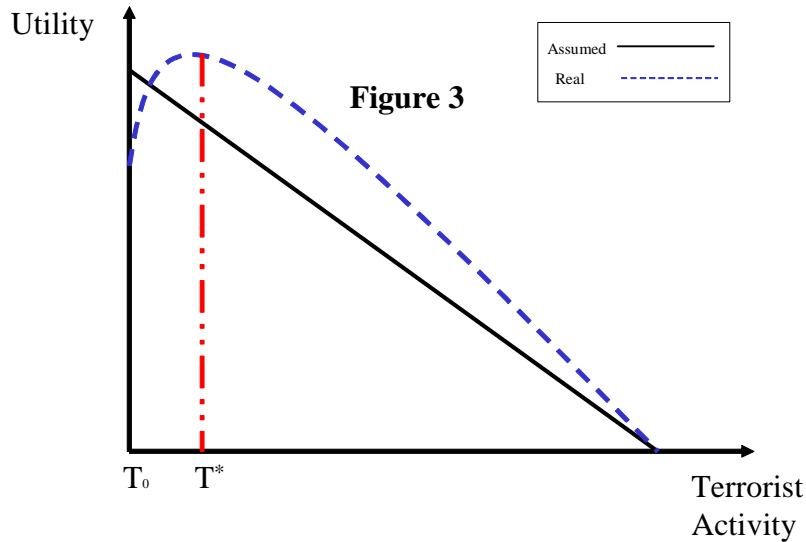
combat the threat. Foreign investors, wary of the risks of investment in terrorist-prone states, are encouraged to move capital to safer, more stable markets. The economies of states that depend on tourism—like Kenya—are especially hard hit when their state is considered at risk for terrorism and subject to travel advisories initiated by foreign governments. Terrorism is detrimental to states' interests on many levels and its downside effects are quite evident.

Unfortunately, the impact of terrorist problems on important actors in a number of states is not always strictly negative. In some cases, local government officials, internal security organizations and other institutions derive benefits from tolerating a certain level of terrorism. In other cases, leaders may experience strong domestic political pressure to tolerate or condone some limited presence and activity of groups that enjoy popular support, despite the fact that they meet or approach threshold U.S. definitions of a

⁸¹ "Somalia says al-Qaida embassy bombing suspect believed killed," *The Guardian*, January 10, 2007.

⁸² The following figures and analysis are adapted from Joseph H. Felter, "Aligning Incentives to Combat Terror," in Rohan Gunaratna, ed., *Combating Terrorism* (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Academic, 2005).

terrorist organization.⁸³ Ultimately, it may not be politically viable for some state leaders to move from T^* to T_0 as depicted below given the internal demands and aggregated interests of their constituents (See Figure 3). In such states, the optimal level of terrorism from the government's perspective is greater than zero.

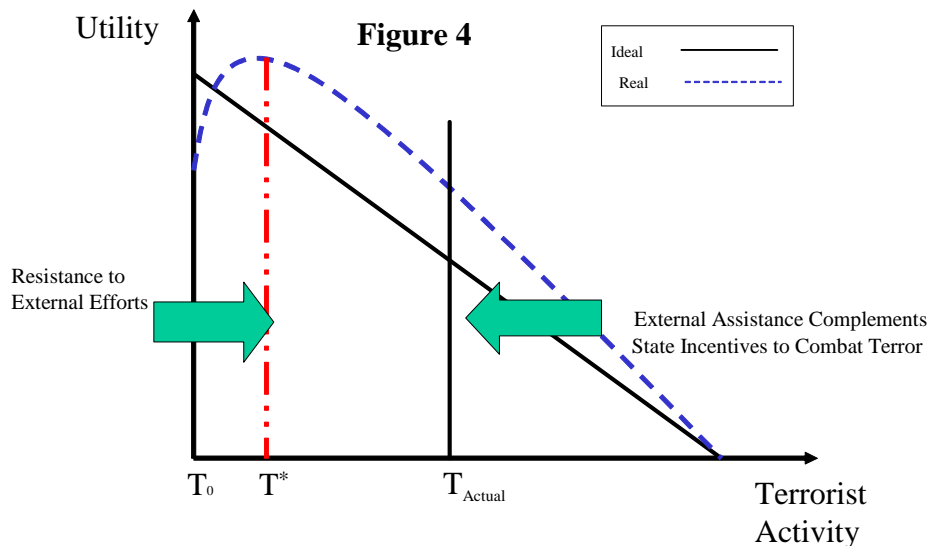


Disaggregating the state to its institutional components helps reveal factors that could modify a state's commitment to "finishing the task" of defeating the terrorist threat within its borders. Consider the institutional interests and biases of a state's military, particularly in states like Kenya that have serious internal security threats and where the military is employed to maintain order. The military may secure a larger portion of the central government's expenditures, maintain higher force levels, and enjoy greater institutional prestige and autonomy if an internal threat such as terrorism exists. Thus members of organizations responsible for maintaining internal security may prefer a level of terror T^* to no terror at all.

When the actual level of terror is greater than the ideal level for a given state or key institutions within the state ($T_{\text{Actual}} > T^*$), external assistance to combat terrorism can complement and empower the state's efforts to reduce terror. While the assistance for combating terror may not be used as efficiently as the provider desires, the target state does have the incentive to implement strategies to reduce the overall level of terrorism to its ideal point T^* .

⁸³ Consider for example the Indonesian government's tepid response to Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) and their less-than-aggressive pursuit of Abu Bakar Bashir, the former emir of Jemaah Islamiyah who was released from prison in June 2006 after serving a reduced sentence for his role in inspiring the 2002 Bali bombings.

The challenge for effective strategies to combat terror from an external state's perspective arises when the actual level of terror approaches a given state's ideal level of terrorism. This shift in incentive compatibility is depicted at Figure 4.



When the actual terrorist presence or level of activity in a state (T_{Actual}) is reduced to a point close to T^* , a rational state leader or influential stakeholder within the government will resist efforts to reduce the level of terror beyond T^* . Reductions beyond this point may be in the interests of the aid provider but not the target state. Strategies intended to reduce terror further must anticipate the fact that leaders and key institutions may reach a point where they face negative returns from continued cooperation.

The dynamic described in Figure 4 confronts bilateral cooperation efforts in a variety of other circumstances beyond combating terror. For example, U.S. initiatives to assist and cooperate with other states to interdict threats from drugs, transnational crime, and insurgency also meet resistance when the incentives to cooperate diverge.

Since 9/11, divergent incentives between provider and recipient states have become an obstacle to combating terrorism. The United States-led Global War on Terror initiated a huge increase in foreign aid disbursed to states cooperating in efforts to defeat terrorist threats. Table 1 depicts some of the largest increases in foreign appropriations from the beginning of U.S. operations through the end of 2003. Clearly many countries have received a significant windfall from U.S. aid provided to support this effort.

Table 1: Foreign Appropriations (in millions)

Country	2001 (Pre 9/11)	Post 9/11 -2003	Real Increase
Pakistan	\$3.50	\$1,293.50	\$1,290.00
Colombia	\$4.67	\$573.18	\$568.51
Uzbekistan	\$28.10	\$171.10	\$143.00
Georgia	\$4.98	\$116.30	\$111.32
Philippines	\$7.40	\$82.90	\$75.50
Tajikistan	\$16.70	\$70.40	\$53.70
Kyrgystan	\$35.30	\$87.80	\$52.50
Yemen	\$5.30	\$38.60	\$33.30
Nepal	\$0.20	\$29.50	\$29.30
Indonesia	\$49.90	\$76.90	\$27.00
Turkmenistan	\$7.30	\$19.20	\$11.90
Djibouti	\$0.60	\$6.40	\$5.80

Federation of American Scientists Arms Sales Monitoring Project.⁸⁴

This windfall has in turn created a set of perverse incentives for states with a terrorist presence.⁸⁵ Consider two states, a recipient and a donor. The donor state conditions its assistance on the level of terror observed in or projected from the recipient state. The donor state provides more assistance to states experiencing greater terrorist threats. Knowing it will get more aid in the future if it does not fully eradicate the terrorist threat, the recipient state has strong incentives to maintain some level of terrorism. This dynamic played out in the Philippines where local government officials profited from various terrorist activities by the Communist Terrorist Movement and later the Abu Sayyaf Group. Incentives to tolerate—in some cases even promote—a certain level of terrorism at local levels challenges efforts by the central government to combat the threat.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Pre-9/11 figures reflect all sources of aid appropriated by the Foreign Operations and Appropriations Act for the year 2001. Post 9/11 figures include two supplemental appropriations acts passed in late 2001 and in 2002 as well as the aid included in the 2003 Foreign Operations Appropriations Act. Some aid was given to states to interdict terrorists with links to al-Qa’ida within their borders, e.g. Georgia, Philippines, and Yemen, while other states were cooperating with the U.S. in its operations in Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. In cases such as Colombia, special aid to interdict narco-terrorists was provided. This table was adapted from data compiled by Tamar Gabelnick and Matt Schroeder of the Federation of American Scientists Arms Sales Monitoring Project and published in the January/February 2003 *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*.

⁸⁵ For a game-theoretic analysis of this problem see Felter, “Aligning incentives.”

⁸⁶ This agency problem between the Philippine central government and local officials stemmed from how resources were allocated by the central government to address terrorist challenges. Resources were committed based on the presence and level of terrorist activities in a certain area. This created perverse incentives to promote/signal a level of terrorist activity that could capture government rents conditioned on such activities. The increase in external assistance provided by the United States following 9/11 made this particularly problematic as good governance at local levels was in a sense being punished while the

The conditions for states to prefer a non-zero level of terrorism are likely to occur in states like Kenya where terrorism ranks low on the list of internal security problems, where the state faces no significant external threat, and where the presence of terrorism leads to large aid flows. In such states, providing economic and security assistance to combat terrorism based on the presence of terrorists, or the severity of its threat, actually risks *increasing* the expected future level of terror in that target state. Aid conditioned on *level* of terror provides a perverse incentive to tolerate more terror with the expectation of receiving even greater aid in the future. Conditioning foreign aid on the amount of measurable effort a state makes to combat terror, however, provides states the incentives to actively reduce their terrorist threats. Ultimately, states interested in combating terrorism are better off not providing *any* additional foreign aid to a state than they are disbursing aid based on the target state's level of terrorism or terrorist activity.

Successful counterterrorism assistance to weak states requires creating incentives that promote effective internally generated and sustainable counterterrorism measures. To do this, cooperative bilateral and multilateral efforts to help weak states must be based on how hard states try to fight terrorism. Basing such efforts on the threat of terrorism creates perverse incentives that may lead local officials to prefer low levels of terrorism to no terrorism at all.

opposite was rewarded. See Joseph H. Felter, "Taking Guns to a Knife Fight: A Case for Empirical Study of Counterinsurgency" (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 2005).

3. Case Study: Somalia

I. Introduction: The Somali Context

An essential point of departure for understanding current manifestations of radical Islamism and jihadi violence in Somalia is an examination of the historical, cultural, environmental, and social context of the country. This section explores key aspects of this Somali context. The core thesis is that *the Somali context has generally tended to inhibit and constrain the rise of radical Islamism* (specifically, Salafi Islam) in both its non-violent and jihadi manifestations. Specifically, the practice of Sufi Islam and its deep integration into Somali culture; the enduring salience of clannism; and Somalia's pragmatic political culture have all inoculated Somali society to some degree from radicalism. Conversely, several newer features of the Somali context, including the diasporization of Somali society, rapid urbanization, and fifteen years of war and state collapse, have eroded some of these inhibitors to radicalism.

Sufi Islam. Traditionally, the practice of Islam in Somalia has been described as moderate—a “veil lightly worn.” Islam was and remains integrated into local customs. The strict, conservative *Wahhabist* practice of Islam in neighboring Gulf States was largely unknown in Somalia and considered foreign to Somali culture.

Sufi brotherhoods are the oldest and most widespread Islamic organizations in Somalia, and also cut across clan affiliations. These religious orders are moderate and embrace peaceful co-existence with secular political authorities. The *Qadiriya*, *Salihya*, and *Ahmadiya* sects—found worldwide—are the most influential in Somalia today. Of these, only the *Salihya* sect is distinguished by its involvement in modern politics – it was the sect of Said Mohamed Abdullah Hassan, the “Mad Mullah,” who waged a twenty year war of resistance against British and Italian colonial rule in northern Somalia. It is noteworthy that the two times in Somali history when Islamic identity was successfully mobilized for jihad were both anti-foreign, anti-Christian liberation movements—one, that of Said's anti-colonial resistance and the other a 16th-century jihad against Abyssinian conquest led by Imam Ahmed Gurey.

Clannism. Somalia is a lineage-based society, where virtually all members of society are identified in part by their clan family. Somali clannism is fluid, complex, and frequently misunderstood. At the risk of oversimplification, one can make the case that clannism—especially since the collapse of the state in 1991—forms the basis for most of the core social institutions and norms of traditional Somali society, including personal identity, rights of access to local resources, customary law (*xeer*), blood payment (*diya*) groups, and social support systems. Islamic identity is one of several “horizontal identities” that cut across clan lines, but in a manner which tends to be subordinate to or which complements rather than challenges the primacy of clannism. Religious leaders are often quite influential, but their authority is generally limited to their own clan. Beyond their clan, their role shifts to that of ambassador or negotiator representing their clan's interests. Likewise, *sharia* law has historically never been a primary source of law, but aspects of *sharia* were assimilated within *xeer*, the indigenous Somali justice system.

Somali sheikhs and religious leaders have traditionally controlled limited judicial functions—typically “family law,” including divorce and inheritance disputes; respected sheikhs are also called upon as arbitrators or peacemakers (*nabadoon*). Despite the ascendance of a political Islamic movement in contemporary Somalia, clannism remains the dominant political logic within which Islamists and *sharia* courts are generally constrained. Because clan is the principal source of individual and household security, it tends to be especially mobilized in a context of state collapse, lawlessness, and chronic insecurity. This works against trans-clan movements like political Islam.

Pastoralism. Historically, most of the Somali population was pastoral or semi-pastoral. Though Somalia has in the past four decades experienced rapid urbanization, an estimated 50-60% of the population is pastoral or agro-pastoral. Pastoral populations are typically difficult to organize politically, for obvious reasons. This constitutes a constraint on Islamist movements seeking to mobilize communities. Pastoral mobility is an additional constraint on any movement seeking to establish a secret base—nomads are quick to learn of movements of strangers on their territory, and will contest any presence they deem contrary to their interests. An important part of Somali pastoral culture is also information sharing—what some have termed the “bush radio.” News and rumors are rapidly spread by word of mouth, making it difficult for both Somalis and foreigners to maintain secrecy.

Cultural pride/suspicion of outsiders. Perhaps more than most societies, Somalis tend to be suspicious of the motives of foreigners and quick to take offense at perceived imposition of foreign values. This can manifest itself in a fierce sense of national pride, as well as in a tendency towards xenophobia. This has historically served to insulate Somali Islam from Salafi influences, which are viewed by Somalis as “non-Somali,” Saudi Wahhabism.

Pragmatism. For a variety of reasons, Somali political culture is exceptionally pragmatic. Some observers link this to the physical environment itself, a harsh semi-arid environment which leaves little margin for error for pastoralists hoping to survive the dry season. Somalis have been especially expedient with foreign ideologies, adopting them when beneficial and discarding them the moment they become a liability. Related to this is a culture of negotiation that permeates Somali society and encourages Somalis to recalculate their bargaining position in partnerships on a daily basis. This aspect of Somali political culture provides little traction for movements based on sustained commitment to an abstract cause.

Diasporization of Somali society. More recent changes in the Somali context—especially since 1990—are making Somali society somewhat more susceptible to radical Islam. The first is the transformation of Somalia into a diasporic nation. Beginning in the 1970s, growing numbers of Somalis traveled to the Gulf States or Egypt as migrant laborers or students, where they were exposed to Salafi teachings of Islam. Many of the leaders of Somalia’s multiple Islamist groups share this background. Since the onset of Somalia’s civil wars in the late 1980s, over one million of the country’s 8-9 million people fled as refugees, settling in Europe, North America, and in countries in Africa and the Middle East. The diaspora today plays a powerful and complex role in Somalia’s economy and its political life. Remittances total up to one billion dollars annually, keeping the

economy afloat. Many if not most of the key leaders in secular political groupings, Islamist movements and civil society organizations are diaspora members. Some of the hardline Somali Islamists are diaspora members as well. Islamists have successfully recruited young Somali diaspora members to return to Somalia to join jihadi militias.

Urbanization. Though Somalia remains a mainly rural society, with about 60% of the population engaged in pastoral, agro-pastoral or farming activities, Somalia's urban centers have exploded in growth over the past twenty years. Mogadishu, which was home to only 40,000 inhabitants in the 1940s, is now a city of over one million. Hargeisa, capital of the secessionist state of Somaliland in the north, is the fastest growing large city in Somalia and is expected to reach one million people in coming years. Several small cities—including Bosaso, Galkayo, and Burao—have also seen dramatic growth since the outbreak of war in 1991. Each new humanitarian crisis and war in Somalia produces another wave of displaced rural dwellers into towns and cities; most do not return to rural life. For a variety of reasons, settled urban populations are easier to reach for Islamist movements, making this growing portion of the Somali population more susceptible to recruitment.

II. The Context of State Collapse

Somalia has been without a functional central government since January 1991, making it the longest-running instance of complete state collapse in post-colonial history. This unique context of state collapse has been an important factor in the evolution of both non-violent and jihadi Islamic movements in the country.

Over a dozen national peace conferences have been launched unsuccessfully over a fourteen year period, including the sustained efforts of a large UN peacekeeping mission in 1993-95 (UNOSOM). The latest reconciliation effort produced the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), which was declared in October 2004. At present, the TFG's prospects do not look good. But even in a best-case scenario, the TFG will possess only modest and loose control over the country. For the next several years, Somalia will remain a *de facto* collapsed state.

Governance without Government. Contrary to much of what is written in the popular press, the prolonged collapse of central government has not led to complete anarchy. Important changes have occurred since the early 1990s in the nature of armed conflict, governance and lawlessness, rendering the country less anarchic than before. Contemporary Somalia is without government but not without governance. Armed conflict is now more localized, less lethal, and of much shorter duration. Criminality, though still a serious problem, is much better contained than in the early 1990s, when egregious crimes could be committed with impunity. A variety of local forms of governance have emerged to provide Somali communities with at least minimal levels of public order. Informal rule of law has emerged via local *sharia* courts, neighborhood watch groups, the reassertion of customary law and blood compensation payments and the robust growth of private security forces protecting business assets. More formal administrative structures have been established at the municipal, regional and trans-regional levels as well. Somaliland in the north is by far the most developed of these polities, and has made important gains since the late 1990s in consolidating rule of law,

multi-party democracy, functional ministries and public security. Other sub-state administrations have tended to be vulnerable to spoilers and internal division or have had only a weak capacity to project authority and deliver core services. Collectively, these informal and formal systems of governance fall well short of delivering the basic public security and services expected of a central government, but they provide a certain level of predictability and security to local communities.

Interests and State Collapse. This phenomenon of “governance without government” has been driven by gradual shifts in the interests of key local actors and in the manner in which they seek to protect and advance those interests. The general trend is toward greater interests in improved security, rule of law and predictability. This shift in interests can be traced to the inadvertent impact of the UNOSOM presence in Mogadishu in 1993-1994. Though the intervention itself was a failure, the large UN operation poured an enormous amount of money, employment and contract opportunities into the country, which helped to stimulate and strengthen legitimate business, shifting business activities away from a war economy toward construction, telecommunications, trade and services. In the process, it helped to reshape local interests in security and rule of law, and eventually local power relations as well. It also helped give rise to a business community in Mogadishu which by 1999 broke free of local warlords and bought militiamen out from beneath them. The result is that today the businessmen’s private security forces are the largest and best-armed militias in the city, and warlords, though still potential spoilers, are not nearly as powerful as before.

The evolving interest in rule of law and predictability is not only an agenda increasingly embraced by businessmen. It is also actively promoted by neighborhood groups, who have formed local security watch groups to patrol their streets. These groups consist of professionals, especially in education and health sectors, who are at the forefront of Somalia’s nascent “civil society;” clan elders, who are seeking to recoup their traditional role as peacemakers; and even many militiamen, who over time prefer the stability of a paid job in a private security force to the dangers of banditry. In many instances these changes constitute potential opportunities for reconciliation and state-building.

It is important to recognize, though, that some Somali constituencies which have a growing appreciation for improved public security are not necessarily strong advocates of a return to centralized government. A revived central state poses a potential threat—to impose taxes, restrict or regulate certain types of economic activities, and potentially turn into an instrument of predation and dominance that empowered clans and groups will wield at the expense of their rivals. The collective Somali experience of the central state has not been a positive one and tends to produce “zero-sum” thinking about a revived state. This tends to multiply the number of spoilers when peace talks reach discussions of power-sharing.

The rise of non-state actors as essential components of informal governance and security systems in Somalia has posed a challenge to external organizations accustomed to dealing only with state counterparts. Over the past fifteen years, most development agencies have learned to adapt to this unusual operating environment by creating Memoranda of Understanding with whatever local authorities they encounter on the

ground. These MOUs range from agreements or provision of security to international aid workers to procedures for hiring and allocation of contracts. The UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) oversees MOUs with local authorities and militias on security matters; and neighboring states Ethiopia and Kenya routinely conduct diplomacy with clan leaders in border areas to manage cross-border security issues. These relationships are fragile and if mishandled can compromise local counterparts. The ability of external actors to partner with local non-state actors remains a challenge and a work in progress.

Both progressive and hard-line Islamic movements have benefited from the prolonged collapse of the central state in Somalia. The complete collapse of government social services, for instance, has provided Islamic charities the opportunity to become the primary provider of education and health care services. The absence of a formal judiciary has enabled local *sharia* courts to step into the vacuum at the neighborhood level. For the most part, these social service providers and local *sharia* courts were and are not radical. Most *sharia* courts are controlled by clan elders and businessmen and operated by traditional Sufi clerics, while most of the Islamic social services are associated with more progressive Islamists.

However, hardline Islamists have also exploited the prolonged collapse of the state in Somalia. As discussed below, hardline Somali Islamists were able to capture control of the Council of Islamic Courts (CIC) in 2006 and drive that umbrella movement into increasingly radical and ultimately self-destructive policies. These Islamists also forged links to foreign al-Qa'ida affiliates in the 1990s and later provided several terror suspects safe haven in Somalia. Hardline Islamists in Somalia were very successful at exploiting two commodities which Somali communities desperately craved after fifteen years of civil war and state collapse—a sense of public security and a sense of unity. By providing impressive levels of public order and policing in Mogadishu, and by appealing to a common identity as Somali Muslims rather than clans, the CIC attracted a considerable amount of public support from Somalis at home and abroad. They solidified this public support still further by tapping into strong anti-Ethiopian sentiments. By declaring jihad on Ethiopia, they successfully conflated Somali nationalism, anti-Ethiopianism and Islamism, mobilizing support from a broad range of Somali society, even those who were uncomfortable with some aspects of their Islamist agenda.

The balance of power between “moderates” and “hardliners” among Somali Islamists has been in a constant state of flux and is shaped principally by a combination of access to resources, coercive capacity to intimidate and the broader political context. Generally, situations marked by heightened external threats play to the interests of hardliners, while conditions favoring negotiations, compromise and normalization play into the hands of moderates. Not surprisingly, Islamist hardliners have sought to manufacture conditions of jihad with Ethiopia as a means of consolidating power and marginalizing moderate rivals.

State collapse and terrorist safe havens. It is often claimed that zones of complete state collapse are ideal safe havens for al-Qa'ida and other terrorist groups. The case of Somalia suggests a more complex relationship between “ungoverned space” and terrorist activity. Recent research reviewing empirical evidence of Islamic terrorist activity in the

Horn of Africa demonstrates that al-Qa'ida and its affiliates in the Horn have found Kenya a much more conducive country from which to operate than state-less Somalia. Somalia, it is argued, plays a niche role for terrorists—mainly as a transshipment point for men, money and materiel into east Africa, and in a small number of cases as a safe haven for al-Qa'ida operatives fleeing from the law in Kenya. But Somalia's condition of lawlessness and complete state collapse produces constraints and dangers for terrorist cells just as it creates what aid agencies refer to obliquely as a “non-permissive environment.” Foreign terror suspects operating in Somalia are prone to extortion and betrayal; can get caught up in clan conflicts; are easily visible in a context of few foreign visitors; and face difficulties of communication, transportation, disease and access to clean water. The Harmony documents provide an excellent opportunity to test these claims in the existing literature.

III. Islamic Radicalism and al-Qa'ida Activity in Somalia since 1990

Political Islam in Somalia—that is, any movement expressing overt political objectives organized around the identity and principals of Islam—has been through two full cycles of ascendance and collapse since 1990. This section provides a brief overview of the main trends driving the rise and fall of radical Somali Islamic movements and related al-Qa'ida activities. More detailed studies of Somali Islamists and foreign al-Qa'ida activities are available in published studies such as the excellent series of reports put out by the International Crisis Group.

Two points must be made at the outset. First, most manifestations of Islamist revival in Somalia cannot be considered radical. The al-Islah Salafi movement, for instance, is generally considered to be a progressive and relatively moderate movement, despite efforts by critics to tar it with the same brush as al-Ittihad al-Islami (AIAI). Others, such as Tabliq, are missionary movements promoting rigid and strict adherence to Salafi interpretations of Islam but are focused on social, not political transformation. Graduates from Tabliq madrassas are nonetheless much more inclined to embrace radical and even jihadi agendas, making the distinction between “non-political” and “political” Islam difficult; equally problematic is drawing a meaningful distinction between “moderates,” “radicals,” and “jihadis.”

Second, the dozens of Somali Islamist movements which sprang up in the late 1980s and early 1990s emerged independently of al-Qa'ida support. Al-Qa'ida began expanding cooperation with AIAI only after the group had already been engaged in several losing battles in the Somali civil war and after one branch of AIAI established control over the district of Lu'uq near the Ethiopian border. Most of the top leadership of AIAI had served as heads of precursor Islamist organizations as far back as the early 1980s.¹ AIAI was, in sum, a relatively established, independent organization and one with a leadership complex that was set in place. Non-Somali al-Qa'ida operatives were not therefore in a position to dictate terms to AIAI, and had only marginal influence over the national leadership. There were multiple tensions within AIAI—vertical tensions

¹ International Crisis Group, *Somalia's Islamists*, Africa Report No. 100 (Nairobi and Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2005), 3. Available at <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3830&l=1>.

involving disputes between top leaders and field commanders, and horizontal fissures that tended to manifest themselves along clan fault lines. The vertical tensions produced a context in which the problem of “agency” existed on multiple tiers. While al-Qa’ida sought to shape and direct AIAI activities in Somalia, it confronted internal AIAI problems of agency pitting Islamist leadership against local jihadi commanders.

The First Wave: 1990-1992.

The dozens of small Islamist movements which arose in the late 1980s and early 1990s coalesced into the AIAI movement. The Islamist movement briefly enjoyed rapid growth and strong support from cadres across clan lines in 1991, at one point boasting over a thousand men under arms and control of key seaports at Merka and Kismayo. The movement nearly took control of the northern seaport of Bosaso as well, but a combination of poor command and control, inexperience and clan divisions helped to produce serious setbacks which convinced most of the members that Somalia was not ready for an Islamic state and that da’wa, or preaching and proselytizing, was needed rather than jihad.

In the period from April 1991 to mid-1992, AIAI suffered two major setbacks. First, in April 1991, mainly Darood clan AIAI fighters fought a losing battle north of Kismayo against the forces of General Mohamed Farah Aideed. The Islamist fighters were convinced to protect the city by their clan elders, who duplicitously promised to set up an Islamic emirate in Kismayo in return for AIAI’s protection. At the time, senior AIAI leaders urged the fighters to fall back from the Jubba Valley to avoid a calamity, but the AIAI youth were intent on fighting and refused the more cautious council of the leadership.² This was the first of what would become a series of differences in opinion between the more cautious national leadership of AIAI and militant commanders in the field. In the aftermath, AIAI restructured decision-making in an attempt to concentrate power in the hands of senior figures.

The second setback for AIAI occurred in Bosaso, Puntland, in 1992. There, the AIAI (including many fighters returning from Kismayo) settled and created what one analysis describes as a state within a state in Northeast Somalia, taking over control of seaport revenues.³ AIAI briefly took control of all main towns in the region and declared an Islamic administration, but the dominant Mijerteen clan in the Northeast assembled a militia which routed the Islamists. An estimated 600 died and the rest fled into the remote coastal settlement of Los Qorey in Somaliland. Thereafter the main unit of AIAI gradually dispersed back into their own communities. With the exception of two branches of AIAI—the mainly Marehan clan unit that controlled the town of Lu’uq, and the mainly Ogaden clan movement based in Ethiopia—the rest of AIAI dissolved itself, becoming what some analysts refer to as an “alumni network.”

² Ibid., 5.

³ Ibid., 6.

Ebb Tide: 1992-2000.

Following the dissolution of AIAI in Los Qorey, the movement continued to operate as a discrete organization in two areas—Lu’uq, a stronghold dominated by Islamists mainly from the Marehan clan in the Somali region, and Ethiopia, where mainly Ogaden clan members of AIAI operated. Terrorist attacks against government and civilian targets by the Ethiopian branch of the AIAI in 1995 produced an Ethiopian crackdown on Islamists in the Somali region and also resulted in Ethiopian military attacks on Lu’uq, which was believed by the Ethiopians to have provided logistical support for the Ethiopian-based AIAI. Islamists fled Lu’uq and dispersed back to their own communities. AIAI was described at this point as a “spent force” in Somalia.

Though this appeared to be a low water mark for Islamism in Somalia, it was actually an important period of rebuilding and regrouping. Ex-AIAI members established themselves in business networks, in education, the media and the judiciary, building a base which would later prove critical to the new Islamist movement. An impressive network of Islamic schools, hospitals and charities sprang up, especially in Mogadishu. Locally, communities began to establish neighborhood, clan-based *sharia* courts to provide for themselves a modicum of rule of law. These *sharia* courts were not radical—they were funded by businesses, overseen by clan elders, and operated by traditional clerics. But they would later be used as a base for more politically minded Islamists. By 2000, political Islamism in Mogadishu was clearly an ascendant force. But the particular manifestation of political Islam that would emerge—progressive, moderate Islamism or radical jihadi Islam—was not a foregone conclusion.

The Second Wave: 2000-2006.

Since 2000, Islamist leaders with clear national ambitions—including Hassan Dahir Aweys—have resurfaced and used a succession of Islamic court umbrella movements as a platform to advance their national political aspirations. This period of recent Islamic ascendance is well-known and extensively documented and need not be repeated here.⁴ What is important to stress is that the umbrella movement of *sharia* courts (which eventually became known as the Council of Islamic Courts, or CIC) developed its own financial support from local businesses and contributions from abroad; developed the most powerful, committed and well-trained militia in the country; attracted support from across a range of different clans; and at a fairly early stage struggled with an internal split between moderates and hard-liners, including a jihadi militia unit known as the *shabaab* which conducted a dirty war of political assassinations in Mogadishu from 2004 to 2006. The jihadis within the movement were also responsible for providing safe haven to a small number of foreign al-Qa’ida figures wanted for the 1998 terrorist attacks on U.S. Embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam.

It was the CIC which decisively defeated the U.S.-backed Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism in June 2006, expanding its control over all of Mogadishu and most of south-central Somalia. Over the second half of 2006, the CIC veered increasingly into more radical social and foreign policies, including declarations

⁴ See the series of International Crisis Group reports since 2002.

of jihad on neighboring Ethiopia. By fall of 2006, war between Ethiopia and the Courts was viewed as likely if not inevitable. The fear was that war was exactly what the jihadis wanted, and that they would use a protracted urban guerilla war against Ethiopia to generate backing from throughout the Islamic world.

Ebb Tide or Tsunami? 2007 and Beyond.

The war did take place, but not as most expected. Ethiopia's decisive rout of the CIC forces in initial battles, and the subsequent decision to dissolve the CIC and return militia and weapons back to clan elders in Mogadishu, precipitated a dramatic and sudden collapse of what had appeared to be a robust and politically ascendant Islamist movement. For the third time in fifteen years (1991-92 in Kismayo and Bosaso, in 1996 in Lu'uq, and in 2006 in Mogadishu) an Islamist movement in Somalia appeared to make fatally poor tactical choices, producing military defeats that exposed the thinness of their public support. If past trends are to hold, we can expect the Islamists to disperse, focus again on da'wa and building business and social networks within their communities, and wait before attempting another political or jihadi initiative. But at least some indicators suggest that this time the loss at the hands of the Ethiopians could produce a quick resurgence of radicalized jihadi violence in Somalia.

IV. Assessment of Harmony Documents on Somalia

Somalia is a prominent topic in the translated documents, comprising several hundred pages of transcripts, released for this report. All but one of these documents is sourced to al-Qa'ida operatives.⁵ All but two documents are dated, or appear to have been written, between 1991 through 1995. This was a period of enormous upheaval in Somalia, and included the following events:

- a prolonged crisis of state collapse, civil war, and famine (January 1991-December 1992);
- the U.S.-led UNITAF humanitarian intervention (December 1992-May 1993);
- the handover to the UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) and the protracted armed clashes pitting the UN and U.S. forces against the militia of General Mohamed Farah Aideed in Mogadishu, culminating in the "Black Hawk Down" battle of October 3-4, 1993 (June-October 1993).
- the subsequent period of failed UNOSOM efforts to broker a deal to revive a Somali state, ending with the UNOSOM withdrawal (October 1993-March 1995).

This was also a period when al-Qa'ida was first attempting to forge cooperative relations with Somali Islamists, establish training camps in Somalia and the Ogaden region of Ethiopia (known today as the "Somali region"), develop cells and a regional base of operations in Kenya and, upon the announcement of a U.S.-led humanitarian

⁵ The exception is a secret letter from the Intelligence Service of the Iraqi Embassy in Djibouti to the Director-office of the Iraqi Intelligence Service, regarding radical Islamist activities in Djibouti and Somaliland, October 2001. Harmony, ISGQ-2005-00024493.

intervention in Somalia in late November 1992, target U.S. and UN forces in Somalia. Most of the Somalia documents in the Harmony project thus reflect the concerns and preoccupations of al-Qa'ida at a very particular moment in the group's recent history in Somalia, a period defined by preliminary assessments, initial forays and, not surprisingly given the operational challenges that Somalia posed to all outsiders, initial mistakes.

An important backdrop to the Somalia Harmony documents of 1991-1994 is the relocation of Osama bin Laden from Afghanistan to Sudan in 1992, and the rise of Sudan as a major terrorist safe haven throughout the early to mid 1990s. Al-Qa'ida's increased penetration of East Africa, and its preoccupation with derailing the U.S. and UN intervention in Somalia, is in part a function of al-Qa'ida's physical presence in Sudan at the time.

Appropriate caution must be used in reaching unqualified conclusions about al-Qa'ida and Somali Islamists on the basis of this collection. First, the documents themselves are often fragmentary, due to damage or illegible handwriting. Second, they constitute only a small portion of the correspondence al-Qa'ida operatives certainly produced during this period. Third, some of the reports appear to make questionable claims of responsibility for events that al-Qa'ida may not have had a hand; in the potential for self-promotion and inflated claims in these communications must be considered.⁶ Finally, and perhaps most importantly, at least some of the al-Qa'ida figures who produced these reports were new to the region, resulting in reports that are often simply mistaken about everything from basic Somali geography and clans to explanations of Somali politics.

That said, much can be gleaned from these documents, which are a treasure trove of invaluable evidence of al-Qa'ida's involvement in and perceptions of Somalia. They are equally valuable as glimpses into the internal debates and power struggles of the Somali Islamists themselves. Much of the documentation from this collection serves to reinforce widely held views about the nature of Islamic radicalism in Somalia; in some cases the documents challenge conventional wisdom.

In this section, observations about what the Somali Harmony documents tell us are broken down by topic.

Objectives of al-Qa'ida in Somalia.

The initial objective of al-Qa'ida, as it made preliminary contacts with Somali Islamists, was to explore an alternative base of operations to Afghanistan. Presumably the arrangement struck with the government of Sudan in 1992 reduced the urgency of this objective. Thereafter, the primary mission appears to be to promote recruitment and establish training bases in the Ogaden region of Ethiopia and inside Somalia in support of the Somali "mujahideen." Expeditions and training exercises are conducted in the Somali region of Ethiopia; exploratory missions are sent to Ras Kamboni along the southernmost

⁶ Such claims present leaders with a real problem. They cannot observe whether their operatives in Somalia are working hard to make alliances with problematic clan leaders or not. This may be one reason al-Qaida leaders required extensive reporting despite the obvious security risks this entailed.

Somali coast; and frequent flights to Lu'uq, the town held by AIAI from 1991 to 1996, are made for meetings with AIAI leadership.⁷

That the period of 1991-93 constituted an early, exploratory phase for al-Qa'ida in Somalia is clear from documents discussing the initial establishment of an operational base in Kenya and from the very rudimentary, often glaringly inaccurate knowledge that the al-Qa'ida operatives have of Somalia (discussed below).

The wildcard that transforms al-Qa'ida objectives in Somalia is, of course, the sudden announcement of the U.S.-led humanitarian intervention into Somalia in December 1992. Thereafter, the abiding preoccupation expressed in the documents is the need to attack and derail the U.S./UN mission. On this count the Harmony documents confirm existing evidence from the *USA vs. Usama bin Laden et al.* trial, in which al-Qa'ida views the intervention in Somalia as a first step by the U.S. toward Sudan. In this sense, Somalia is a subsidiary priority for al-Qa'ida—the main objective is to thwart a dangerous precedent of American armed intervention in the Horn which could endanger al-Qa'ida's base in Sudan. Ironically, Somalia was a subsidiary priority for the United States as well, which intervened in Somalia, according to then Acting Secretary of State Larry Eagleburger, “because it wasn't Bosnia”—in other words, to set a precedent for robust UN peace enforcement in a place where it appeared doable.

The fact that al-Qa'ida had established working relations with Somali Islamists in 1991 and 1992, and earned at least a modest working knowledge of the country during that time, is recognized by al-Qa'ida operatives as a major advantage once the U.S. “Operation Restore Hope” forces arrived. “Your early arrival on Somali soil ahead of the enemy America gave you an excellent opportunity to gain knowledge of the battleground ... and understand ... the social and political situation,” notes the author of “The Third Letter to the African Corps.”⁸

The longer-term objectives of al-Qa'ida in Somalia appear to get lost once the American and UN presence is established there, at which point the sole preoccupation of the movement becomes striking at the enemy. The longer-term dispensation of Somalia is not given much attention, to the chagrin of one al-Qa'ida observer writing in 1995:

The West was defeated and fled Somalia.... [But] the original problem that you went to address still exists. What happened to the Somali Salafia and where is it now...? Did you suddenly go to Somalia and suddenly withdraw, as happened in Afghanistan, without accomplishing any clear objective or follow up the victory and benefit from it to accomplish additional victories?⁹

Agency Problems.

One of the most fascinating findings emerging from review of the Harmony Somalia documents is the tensions within the triangular relationships involving the foreign al-Qa'ida operatives, the national-level AIAI leadership and the local Islamist commanders.

⁷ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600104; Harmony, AFGP-2002-800597; Harmony, AFGP-2002-600113.

⁸ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600053, 13.

⁹ Ibid., 14.

The tensions in these relations, which occasionally express themselves in incentives in some of the documents, arise from problems of agency.

The first sign of a power struggle between AIAI leadership and militant field commanders occurred in 1991 outside of Kismayo where, as was noted above, AIAI senior officials argued in vain for a withdrawal. Following the crushing defeat of AIAI in Bosaso in 1992, national leadership of AIAI no longer sought to hold territory and no longer saw jihad as an appropriate tactic. AIAI's top leaders believed instead that Somalia was unprepared for an Islamic state and required da'wa, or preaching, first. This position reflected the fact that AIAI leadership itself had concluded that the contextual factors noted in the first section of this chapter were indeed real constraints on political Islam and required a generational project of resocializing and preparing Somali society. This long-term and more incremental vision clashed with the desires of the more militant field commanders, especially those in the Somali region of Ethiopia. The Harmony documents capture this tension repeatedly.

In one of the best-developed examples, an al-Qa'ida operative, Saif al-Islam, is providing training to a unit of Ethiopian Somali Islamists in a remote camp in Somali region in July 1993. After first dealing with his own problems of "agency" (his al-Qa'ida superior repeatedly postpones committing to assistance to the Somali Ethiopian cell, and drags his feet on bestowing upon Saif the right to represent al-Qa'ida in discussions with AIAI), Saif must manage an emerging split between the more militant Ethiopian wing and their AIAI leaders in Somalia proper. The Ethiopian AIAI wing issues a decree which commits them to continued jihad against the government of Ethiopia, and which decides to separate from the General Islamic Union in Somalia (AIAI) due to its decision "to abandon jihad for the pursuit of peaceful solutions." The Ethiopia wing also confided to Saif that AIAI leadership "was angry with us when we contacted you in Sudan."¹⁰

What emerges from the collection of Harmony project documents is a tense triangular relationship in which the foreign al-Qa'ida operatives and the militant field commanders tend to share a common set of interests and perspectives in opposition to the AIAI leadership, which is perceived as too cautious and political. The position of the AIAI leadership accurately reflects the Somali penchant for pragmatism and risk aversion described earlier in this chapter.

Problems of Preference Divergence.

Al-Qa'ida operatives clearly desire jihadi attacks against the "enemy" (the U.S./UN in Somalia, Ethiopian forces in Ethiopia). Those high-risk preferences based on a global agenda diverge from the agenda of the AIAI leadership, which seeks power nationally and is less inclined to take on the risks of attacking the U.S. military. In one report, al-Qa'ida operatives meet with AIAI leader "Sheikh Hassan Tahir" (Hassan Dahir Aweys)¹¹ in 1993 and promise to fund "all operations" of AIAI if it engages in military operations against the U.S.; otherwise, al-Qa'ida will continue to aid the secular resistance forces

¹⁰ Harmony, AFGP 2002-600104, 15.

¹¹ See Appendix B-III for a more in-depth discussion of Aweys. Also, see Harmony, AFGP-2002-800611 for a Kenya Visa Application with the name of Hassan Aweys. Ironically, this document was seized by U.S. Forces in Afghanistan during the 2002 timeframe.

(factional militias). Sheikh Hassan's response is that "the time is not right to start conducting jihad" and that "they must work against the Americans through political means."¹² In a separate communication, this preference on the part of the top AIAI leadership to avoid or postpone jihad is treated with contempt by an al-Qa'ida official, who concludes that "only a coward or scoundrel would say such a thing." He continues: "I have no doubt that even Saddam Hussein, Aided, Arafat, Sayyaf, Hikmatyar, and Burhan have more manhood than they have. Like the latter, they are useless. Beware of them."¹³

Clannism.

The Somali Islamist movement in 1991-96 was divided to some degree by clan, and at any rate was forced to operate in a context in which clannism was a highly mobilized and politically exploited identity. This confronted al-Qa'ida with horizontal as well as vertical cleavages in its local ally. Most of the al-Qa'ida operatives who write in these documents were new to Somalia and were poorly equipped to understand the complexities of Somali clannism. Their reports are littered with crude, inaccurate descriptions of Somali lineages and express the same level of bewilderment over clannism that one frequently hears from international aid workers and diplomats. Clannism is said by the al-Qa'ida reporters to infuse the Islamic movement itself. "Each member of the movement is fanatically attached to his tribe," complains one entry.¹⁴ Another entry, from the Somali region in Ethiopia, reveals the extent to which the Islamists were unwelcome by local clans.

In several instances, documents reveal that al-Qa'ida encounters difficulties because its local Islamist allies are predominantly from one clan and are resisted by rival clans. Here al-Qa'ida runs into the same difficulty that so many international NGOs have faced in the field—the prospect of being "captured" by one clan and earning the enmity of others in the process.

Leadership and Organization.

A major complaint of the foreign al-Qa'ida figures writing in the Harmony documents is the poor leadership and organization of the Somali Islamic movement. At the time most of these documents were produced, AIAI had more or less dissolved itself as a formal organization, operating more like a loose network. Hence it is not surprising that al-Qa'ida discovers a lack of organization. It specifically complains about corruption and financial mismanagement,¹⁵ and lack of chain of command. "How is it," one entry chides, "that military force is employed by order of civilians and the military commander doesn't even know about it?"¹⁶ The disastrous early military losses by AIAI in Kismayo and Bosaso are also assessed as the result of faulty leadership. Interestingly, Hassan Dahir Aweys, the CIC leader who was a principal architect of the disastrous Islamist war with Ethiopia in December 2006, was a commander in both of those early losses.

¹² Harmony, AFGP 2002-600110, 8-10.

¹³ Harmony, AFGP 2002-600053, 4.

¹⁴ Harmony, AFGP 2002-800640, 5.

¹⁵ Harmony, AFGP 2002 600104, 19;

¹⁶ Ibid., 23.

Islamic Charities.

Following the 9/11 attacks, a number of Islamic charities operating in Somalia and Kenya were shut down on the grounds that they were being used as fronts for al-Qa'ida. The Harmony documents do not provide any specific evidence to back up charges against particular Islamic NGOs, but several passages allude to al-Qa'ida's use of charities. In one instance, an al-Qa'ida operative reminds his Somali counterparts that "jihad brings a lot of money from charities."¹⁷ In another entry, an al-Qa'ida operative assesses the level of corruption and competence of relief agencies they have penetrated along the Somali-Kenya border, noting that "the situation of the relief agency in Lipouy [Liboi] is not yet corrupted, unlike that of Mandeera which is a hopeless case."¹⁸

Sufi Opposition.

In some cases foreign al-Qa'ida operatives appear stunned at the depth of resistance they face from Sufi clerics. In the Somali region of Ethiopia the al-Qa'ida operative describes with shock the "level of cunning and hatred" toward the Islamic Union; when one local cleric preached at mosque the local people kick the Islamic Union out of their village.¹⁹

Lack of Mass Support.

One of the more revealing and insightful criticisms of the Somali AIAI is the charge leveled by an al-Qa'ida official that the movement is too elitist and cut off from the masses. "A movement that is isolated from its masses," he argues, "that is suspicious of its people, and whose people are suspicious of it, can achieve nothing but destroy itself."²⁰ This was in fact precisely one of AIAI's biggest problems—it was a movement of educated, well-traveled elites, who did not speak the same political language of the average Somali. Ironically, however, the AIAI leadership's decision to focus on da'wa, to socialize Somali society and prepare it for Islamic rule, was an implicit recognition of the gap that existed between the AIAI leaders and the people.

Al-Qa'ida Pragmatism/Instrumentalism.

This same al-Qa'ida official argues that al-Qa'ida has erred in seeking out appropriate allies in Somalia. "Al-Qa'ida's Salafia tendencies have led it to search for a political ally in Somalia with an identical intellectual focus," he opines. "This is the greatest calamity."²¹ In his view, Somalis are merely temporary allies of expedience, tools to use in the battle against the "Knights of the Cross." To that end, he argues for greater partnership with secular Somali factions (presumably General Aideed and the SNA) which may be more effective in battling American and UN forces. In a remarkably candid and pragmatic passage, he notes that "nearly everywhere your situation and ours has no place for the ideal; just for that which is the least bad.... You must find men you can deal with, even if they are not from our venerable forefathers.... I do not mind

¹⁷ Harmony, AFGP 2002-6000104, 17.

¹⁸ Harmony, AFGP 2002-600113, 7.

¹⁹ Harmony, AFGP 2002-600104, 21.

²⁰ Harmony, AFGP 2002-600053, 1.

²¹ Ibid.

cooperating with Aided if you have made sure that what he is doing with the Americans is not staged....”²²

Al-Qa’ida Confronting Somali Culture.

Some of the culture clashes captured in the documents are predictable and sound remarkably similar to after-hours complaints by new aid workers about “ungrateful locals.” “The strange people who received us were lukewarm and wary towards us,” complains one al-Qa’ida entry. “They are stingy and greedy.”²³ But setting aside the numerous disparaging remarks about Somalis that appear in these entries, the more significant complaint was over Somali decision-making. The Somali practice of inclusive, consensus-oriented decision-making (traditionally, the male elders gathering in a “shir” or assembly) collided with the need for rapid, streamlined command, and resulted in complaints about the lack of secrecy in Somalia.²⁴ This last point is particularly important because it points to the fact that local decision-making norms influence the value of areas as terrorist safe havens.

AIAI Terrorism.

AIAI was designated as a terrorist organization in late 2001, on charges that it was behind a series of lethal bombings and assassination attempts in Ethiopia in 1995. For years, Somali members of AIAI have argued that by 1995 AIAI was a very decentralized organization and that the Ethiopian Somali AIAI conducted those attacks on their own, against the wishes and advice of the AIAI groups inside Somalia. It was unfair, these ex-AIAI members claimed, to brand the whole organization as terrorists when they disagreed with the acts committed. The Harmony papers help to document the growing split between the Ethiopian and Somali-based AIAI in the early 1990s, and the clear militancy of the Ethiopian Islamists compared to their colleagues in Somalia. That heightened militarism on the part of the Ethiopian wing of the AIAI was no doubt linked to the fact that the AIAI in Ethiopia was fighting for very different objectives than the AIAI wing inside Somalia. The Ethiopian wing of AIAI was part of a long-standing irredentist armed insurgency by Somali Ethiopians. The movement’s aim of imposing an Islamist state over all of Somali-inhabited East Africa required armed violence against one of Africa’s largest and most seasoned militaries. By contrast, the AIAI wings inside Somalia were preoccupied with expanding their control in a country where they faced no government at all.²⁵

Logistical Obstacles and Constraints Faced in Somalia and the Ogaden.

The Harmony documents present compelling evidence to support the thesis that foreign terrorists find remote zones of state collapse and armed conflict relatively inhospitable and challenging operating environments, not “safe havens.” Field reports are replete with complaints about poor food, unsafe water, uncomfortable shelter, heat, disease, biting insects, defective vehicles and poor tires. The physical constraints are vividly presented

²² Harmony, AFGP-2002-600053, 2

²³ Harmony, AFGP 2002-6000104, 5.

²⁴ Harmony, AFGP 2002-800640, 17, 19.

²⁵ For more on AIAI, see Appendix A-I.

in an entry describing the condition in the remote, swampy, forested coastal area of Badadhe, near the Kenyan border.

Hassan Dahir Aweys.

The U.S. government placed Hassan Dahir Aweys on a designated list of terror suspects for his alleged links to al-Qa'ida and for his sheltering of several foreign al-Qa'ida operatives in Mogadishu. Aweys has repeatedly denied that he has ties to al-Qa'ida or has provided safe haven to terrorists, and his supporters have argued that there is no evidence to back up these charges. Some well-placed analysts have argued that Aweys is actually a moderate voice within the current Islamist discourse in Somalia, and that he is fighting a rear guard battle against young, radical jihadists in the *shabaab* militia.

Intriguingly, the Harmony documents provide evidence to back both of those claims. If repeated references to Sheikh Hassan and Sheikh Hassan Tahir refer in fact to Aweys²⁶—then it provides a clear picture of regular, routinized contact between al-Qa'ida operatives and Aweys on matters of mutual cooperation. This includes early references to him traveling to Sudan,²⁷ and being present in Ras Kamboni while al-Qa'ida was establishing a training camp there in 1993.²⁸ He can, perhaps, deny that these contacts were consequential, but not that that they occurred.

At the same time, Aweys comes across in these documents as an Islamist leader who has tactically rejected the use of jihad during the period 1993-95. His al-Qa'ida contacts quote him as saying that the time is not yet right for jihad. He and other leaders of AIAI are the target of withering criticism by militant Somali commanders in the field, and by some al-Qa'ida operatives as well, for being a “coward.” This portrait of a hardliner who is nonetheless viewed as a constraining force on younger, less patient jihadis is remarkably similar to the portrait some observers have painted of Aweys in recent times.

Use of Contractors.

One concern about al-Qa'ida's use of Somalia as a transshipment point for short-term operations into East Africa—for movement of money, men, and materiel—is the fact that terrorists need not locate fellow believers to conduct these operations, but that most any Somali businessman is willing to conduct a transaction for a fee with no questions asked. This fear is confirmed in one of the Harmony documents describing al-Qa'ida's rental of a boat and its Bajuni captain to ship them from Lamu to Ras Kamboni. The al-Qa'ida operative writing this report describes his Bajuni sea captain as one of those with “low morals and big egos. Cigarette smoking, chewing qat, chasing women and lying, etc., are common among them.” While acknowledging that “we don't trust him,” the operative

²⁶ Harmony, AFGP-2002-800611.

²⁷ Harmony, AFGP 2002-800600.

²⁸ Harmony, AFGP 2002-600113, 6.

concludes that, “as far as his skills are concerned he is excellent. I traveled with him previously; he knows the best ways to approach shores.”²⁹

Use of Kenya as a Base of Operations.

The Harmony documents reinforce the observation that while Somalia was a target of al-Qa'ida efforts to establish training bases and project influence, Kenya proved to be a far more conducive setting to base al-Qa'ida operations. Multiple al-Qa'ida cells operated unimpeded throughout the country (mainly in Nairobi and Mombasa). Harmony documents paint a remarkable portrait of al-Qa'ida cells freely operating in Kenya, with few expressed concerns about being monitored or detained by Kenyan police or security forces. The ease with which they chartered small planes to fly in and out of Lu'uq, Somalia, in 1993, during a period when that town was controlled by AIAI, with no hint of authorities checking on their activities, is especially revealing, as is their transaction to hire and purchase boats on the coast for travel into coastal Somalia. Indeed, the only anxiety expressed in Harmony document communications is a complaint in 1993, during the worst moments of political crisis in Kenya, that “Kenya is not a good place.... [T]he cost of living is high, plus corruption is dangerously prevalent – there is theft, house break-ins, no political stability, and it is possible there will be an explosion in the country.”³⁰ We explore al-Qa'ida's fascination with Kenya in greater detail in chapter 4 of this report.

Somalia Today.

Current events in Somalia are hard to interpret. In December 2006 it appeared that business leaders and clan elders in Mogadishu essentially told the CIC not to return to the city to wage a protracted guerrilla struggle. This interpretation of events is hard to reconcile with recent fighting in Mogadishu. One interpretation is that the violence is driven by rivalries between clan leaders, some of whom are deeply dissatisfied with the Transitional Federal Government's efforts to assert control over economic activity and so are giving free rein to their fighters.³¹ So far there is simply insufficient evidence to fully understand the dynamics of this rapidly evolving situation. However, it does highlight the fact that a desire among Somali business and clan interests to end civil conflict does not necessarily mean they will support or tolerate a strong central state that could impinge on their prerogatives.

²⁹ Harmony, AFPG 2002-600114.

³⁰ Harmony, AFPG 2002-800597.

³¹ Journalists have suggested the violence is being driven by Hawiye clan leaders unhappy with increased import duties imposed by the new government. See “A failed state that threatens the region,” *The Economist*, 7 April 2007, 43. Others suggest the violence is driven by rivalries between the Hawiye clan and the Darood clan of interim President Abdullahi Yusuf. See Jesse Nunes, “Fighting between Ethiopians and Somali insurgents escalates in Mogadishu,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 30 March 2007; and Abdurrahman Warsameh, “Somali chaos: Clans, Islamists, foreigners,” *ISN Security Watch*, 29 March 2007, available at <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/news/sw/details.cfm?id=17430>.

4. Case Study: Kenya

I. Introduction

Of all the countries in the Horn of Africa, Kenya boasts the most stable, most effective, and most democratic government. Kenya has also experienced the most terrorist attacks against Western targets and has been the most useful operational base for al-Qa'ida.¹ This “Kenyan Paradox” is driven by the convergence of four factors. First, Kenya provides a target-rich environment for terrorists because of its relatively advanced economy and its long-standing ties with the United Kingdom, United States, and Israel. Second, Kenya maintains a functioning sovereign government, one increasingly subject to public opinion. The former limits the operational freedom of Western intelligence and counterterrorism units, and the latter heightens the cost of being seen to be doing others' bidding in the “War on Terror.” Third, Kenya suffers from weak governance in a number of critical areas, including security and the criminal justice system. This discourages those Kenyans who might have relevant information from providing it to the authorities. Fourth, the presence of a disaffected minority Muslim population,² especially along the Kenyan coast, provides al-Qa'ida operatives an environment in which they can operate with less security pressure than elsewhere in the region.³ Simply put, Kenya is an attractive place for al-Qa'ida to operate.⁴ The level of development and stability have increased the density of targets and logistical convenience of conducting operations in Kenya while the combination of a more responsive political leadership and weak governance reduce the security costs of doing so.⁵

Some of these factors can be ameliorated by adjusting existing policies to account for the complex forces at work in Kenya. Others are background conditions that cannot be changed but must be understood. Section II begins our analysis by reviewing Kenya's history as a target for terrorist activity. Section III examines structural factors that make Kenya an attractive place for terrorists. We focus mainly on the governance challenge in Kenya, drawing on theoretical insights developed in the last section of Chapter 2. The next two sections draw on a series of recent interviews along with other sources. Section IV looks at the historical and current status of Kenyan Muslims. Section V briefly reviews how current counterterrorism initiatives are

¹ Since 1990 Kenya has suffered seven terrorist attacks, three of which were conducted by al-Qa'ida. The other four have not been linked to foreigners, or even specifically to Muslims. During the same period there were: four terrorist attacks in Eritrea, none of which involved al-Qa'ida; 34 attacks in Ethiopia, only two of which are attributable to jihadi groups, the rest being conducted by groups involved in political or territorial struggles with the Ethiopian state; and 21 attacks in Sudan, all of which were committed by groups involved in the Sudanese civil war or other local conflicts in which Sudan was involved. MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base, available at <http://www.tkb.org> [accessed March 30, 2007].

² Various surveys put the country's Muslim population at 8-10 percent, though (as noted below) with particular and significant regional concentrations.

³ In the documents surveyed for the two Harmony reports, al-Qa'ida operatives in the 1990s reported greater security pressure in Nairobi and in Somalia than along the Kenyan coast.

⁴ For a somewhat different take on al-Qa'ida's experiences in Kenya and the recruiting potential for East Africa, see William Rosenau, “Al Qa'ida Recruitment Trends in Kenya and Tanzania,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 28 (2005): 1-20.

⁵ See Chapters 2 and 3 for a summary of the disadvantages of operating from a failed state. At the same time, al-Qa'ida documents reveal considerable concerns with both the level of criminal-insecurity in Kenya and its potential for (eventual) political instability, if not an actual “explosion.” Harmony, AFGP-2002-800597, 7.

perceived by both the incumbent government and its citizens. Section VI attempts to explain the complex set of policy games played in Kenya. Section VII concludes by discussing the future prospects for terrorism in Kenya.

II. Terrorism in Kenya: A Brief History

Until very recently, terrorism in Kenya was mostly a foreign affair.⁶ Operatives from elsewhere saw Kenya as a permissive, target-rich environment. The first major attack of the modern era was the Norfolk Hotel bombing in December, 1980, which killed sixteen people and injured more than one hundred. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) claimed responsibility. Most believe the attack served as retaliation for Kenya's decision to allow the launch of the 1972 Israeli military raid on Entebbe, Uganda from Kenyan soil.⁷

Nearly two decades later, on August 7, 1998, al-Qa'ida attacked the American Embassy in Nairobi with a truck-bomb. This attack killed some 220 people and injured roughly 5,000 Embassy staff, passers-by and people in neighboring buildings.⁸ Al-Qa'ida simultaneously attacked the U.S. Embassy in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, killing 11 and injuring another 70. An attempt to destroy the American Embassy in Kampala, Uganda, was reportedly foiled on this same date.⁹ All three embassies were accessible and relatively unprotected, making them particularly attractive targets. The Kenyan attack also produced the first known al-Qa'ida operative from Kenya, Sheikh Ahmad Salem Swedan, from Mombasa, as well as Abdullah Muhammad Fazul (henceforth 'Fazul'), a Comorian who reportedly holds a Kenyan passport, though his legal citizenship remains unclear.¹⁰

Al-Qa'ida executed Kenya's third major terrorist attack on November 28, 2002. Two SAM-7 missiles were fired at, but narrowly missed, an Israeli passenger jet taking off from Moi International Airport in Mombasa. Five minutes later, a truck-bomb detonated just outside the lobby of the Israeli-owned and frequented Paradise Hotel in Kikambala along the beach north of Mombasa. Fifteen people were killed and another 35 injured in that attack.¹¹ Clearly, in this case

⁶ We use "terrorism" with reference to Islamic "extremism," but recognize the high level of violence associated with the Mau-Mau uprising/"freedom-struggle" of the 1950s.

⁷ The choice of the specific target appears to reflect the fact that the hotel was then owned by a well-known Jewish-Kenyan family; ironically, today it is owned by a prince in the Saudi royal family.

⁸ The bomb-laden vehicle attempted to enter the underground parking area, but security guards prevented it from doing so. Had they not, the number of Embassy casualties would have been far higher, and the "collateral damage" far less.

⁹ All 20 people arrested in connection with the alleged Kampala plot were apparently released after being held for a month. "All but one of nine arrested over blasts to be released," *Agence France Press: International News*, February 17, 1999; Arye Oded, *Islam & Politics in Kenya* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000); 82.

David H. Shinn, "Fighting Terrorism in East Africa and the Horn," *Foreign Service Journal* (September, 2004).

¹⁰ Swedan was among those indicted, as was Fazul. *United States of America vs. Usama Bin Laden, et al.*, Indictment S (9) 98 cr. 1023 (LBS), available at <http://cns.miis.edu/pubs/reports/pdfs/binladen/indict.pdf>. Both of these individuals remain at large. See Appendix B-I for an in-depth profile of Fazul.

¹¹ The truck had just crashed through the entrance barrier after being denied entry by security guards. Most of the casualties were local dancers performing a welcome dance for the tourists; three Israelis were killed. For a detailed picture of the devastating economic impact of this attack on the local victims' families and the surrounding area, see Susan Richards, "More trouble in paradise," *OpenDemocracy* (Internet), 17 December, 2002.

al-Qa'ida's attention shifted from the U.S. to Israel with the perceived vulnerability of both targets a clear incentive for their selection.¹²

Shortly thereafter, in June 2003, Kenyan authorities foiled a plot to attack the temporary U.S. Embassy in Nairobi using a truck-bomb and an explosive-laden plane. The plane was to be taken from Nairobi's Wilson Airport. This same airport acted as the staging base for al-Qa'ida operatives' entry flights to Somalia in the early 1990s.¹³ One of the suspects arrested by Kenyan police indicated a number of the same individuals involved in the November 2002 attacks on the Paradise Hotel planned this failed attack.¹⁴

A final incident, not associated with al-Qa'ida, occurred on May 12, 2006, when three assailants fire-bombed the Nairobi offices of the Christian radio station Hope-FM after gaining entry to the station's premises by killing a private security guard. An inner security door prevented the attackers from reaching the upper floor where several staff members were hiding. Little is known about their identity, but their motives appear less opaque. The station's weekly program, "Jesus is the Way," which many believe was explicitly designed to win converts to Christianity from the Muslim community, had just been aired.¹⁵ Although minor in scale, this attack marked Kenya's first entirely domestic case of Muslim-based terrorism.¹⁶

Despite two major al-Qa'ida attacks on Western targets in 1998 and 2002, the group's operatives continued to move about the country freely, establish businesses in Mombasa, Nairobi and Lamu, operate Islamic charities, find local brides, rent light aircraft to come and go from Somalia, hold meetings, communicate with al-Qa'ida figures outside the country, transfer money, stockpile weapons and engage in years of undetected reconnoitering of possible targets.¹⁷ The next two sections explore the factors which make Kenya a relatively safe haven for al-Qa'ida.

¹² The killing of a policeman in Mombasa on August 1, 2003 is also connected to these twin attacks. An alleged accomplice of Fazul (the latter wanted in connection with the making of the bombs used in both the U.S. Embassy attack and that of the Paradise Hotel; see Appendix B-I) set off a grenade as he was about to be seated in a police vehicle, killing a police officer. According to a local press report, he was Feisal Ali, "the son of a prominent businessman in Kenya" and a Yemeni national whose wife is described as of "Somali origin." Reportedly, Fazul and Ali, "escaped in the confusion." "US lauds Kenya's fight against terrorism," *East African Standard* (Internet Edition), August 5, 2003.

¹³ Matthew Rosenberg, "Al-Qaida plotted to destroy U.S. Embassy in Kenya in June," *Associated Press*, October 24, 2003; Harmony, AFGP-2002-600104, 3.

¹⁴ See Appendix C-III, the disallowed confession of Omar Said Omar, a suspect in the 2002 attacks. As a result of this information, the Embassy was closed during June 20-24, 2003. A U.S. "terrorist alert" had been issued the previous month when Fazul was reportedly sighted in Mombasa; Desmond Butter, "Threats and Responses: 5-Year Hunt Fails to Net Qaeda Suspect in Africa," *The New York Times*, June 14, 2003.

¹⁵ According to reports and conversation with the station's staff, text-message cell-phone threats had been received at the station during the program's broadcast. In addition, several guests on the program were recent converts from Islam, who explained why they had decided to change faiths and encouraged Muslim listeners to do the same, mainly by extolling the Bible while disparaging the Koran.

¹⁶ On the other hand, religious conflict—on occasion of a violent nature—is not unheard of in Kenya's recent past. David C. Sperling, "Islam and the Religious Dimension of Conflict in Kenya," paper presented at USAID Conference on Conflict and Conflict-Resolution in Kenya, Nairobi, May, 1998.

¹⁷ Appendix B-I and Appendix C-III detail how Fazul, an indicted al-Qa'ida operative, operated in Kenya from 1998 until very recently.

III. Why Foreign Terrorists Like Kenya

Though few in number, the above attacks demonstrate Kenya's significance in terms of recent global terrorism. Moreover, the scale and complexity of attacks in Kenya strongly suggests a permissive environment exists for terror group operations. Understanding what it is about democratic, economically successful Kenya that makes it a relatively frequent target of jihadi terrorism is of paramount importance. A combination of international and domestic factors result in Kenya's targeting. Two specific international factors enhance Kenya's attractiveness. First, the country's foreign policy reflects a long history of close relations with the United States and Israel, as well as the United Kingdom—the former colonial power. Both the United States and Israel maintain a significant official and private-sector presence in Kenya.¹⁸ In addition to current foreign policy issues, these historical relationships provide both an ideological justification for attacks in Kenya and a range of targets. The use of Mombasa as a supply-station for Western military operations and patrols in the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf brought increased attention from al-Qa'ida beginning in the early 1990s.¹⁹ During his infiltration into Somalia, Saif al-Adel illustrates his interests in a trip report along the Kenyan coast. Here he describes Mombasa as, “an island that teems with foreigners who stroll all over the place. It is said that the American army soldiers take their R&R there. Mombasa's security situation is terrible.”²⁰

Second, the country's geography puts it in close proximity to long-running conflicts in northern Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Rwanda. Kenya's porous borders permitted al-Qa'ida operatives to enter and leave the country clandestinely. However, the expense of doing so may explain why most al-Qa'ida operatives traveled to and from Kenya using normal channels.²¹ The exception was travel to Somalia. Throughout the early to mid-1990s, members of al-Qa'ida traveled to Somalia from Kenya by sea and land through the coastal route of Mombasa-Witu-Kiunga in Kenya to Ras Kamboni, Somalia.²²

¹⁸ See Oded, *Islam & Politics in Kenya*; and Erik E. Otenyo, “New Terrorism, Toward an Explanation of Cases in Kenya,” *African Security Review* 13: 3 (2004). Kenya also has a tiny but visible Jewish community. In recent years, some “surveillance” of the Nairobi synagogue has occurred but no specific threat of an attack has materialized. Author interview, Nairobi, March 23, 2007. In his confession statement, Omar refers to instructions from his al-Qa'ida mentors “to fight all Americans, British, Israelites and Australians,” the latter presumably because of their contribution to current operations in Iraq (See Appendix C-III).

¹⁹ Otenyo, “New Terrorism”; Johnnie Carson, “Kenya: The Struggle Against Terrorism,” in Robert Rotberg, ed., *Battling Terrorism in the Horn of Africa* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2005), 173-192. Carson notes the U.S. military Access Agreement with Kenya for naval facilities there, in place since 1980. Well before the 1998 attacks on the U.S. Embassy, al-Qa'ida operatives recorded their observation of American forces using the port city for “R & R,” and their view of the security situation as being extremely lax. See Harmony, AFGP-2002-600111, 2.

²⁰ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600113, 3.

²¹ As both the trial transcript from the 1998 embassy bombings trial and the Harmony documents show, al-Qa'ida operatives tended to move in and out of Kenya, with the exception of trips to Somalia, via commercial airlines. See “FBI Trial Transcripts,” U.S. Federal Court, Southern District of New York. See also *United States of America vs. Usama Bin Laden, et al.*, S (9) 98 cr., 1023, 1301, 1302, 1305. Even though they had problems using commercial air travel with forged passports, traveling by land from Kenya does not appear to have been a common practice for foreign jihadis. See also Harmony, AFGP-2002-600104, AFGP-2002-600113, AFGP-2002-800081, AFGP-2002-800083, AFGP-2002-800088, and AFGP-2002-800089.

²² Harmony, AFGP-2002-600104 and AFGP-2002-600113. In the words of former Kenya International Security Permanent Secretary Dave Mwangi (at least as of 2003), “our most serious vulnerability is that we are neighboring the Somali Republic, a land with no government” (Butler, *op. cit.*).

Turning to domestic factors, Kenya appears, at first glance, to be an unattractive environment for terrorists. In contrast to neighboring Somalia, Kenya boasts a relatively robust state equipped with a national police force, capable intelligence services, and a pervasive system of provincial administration.²³ Its overwhelmingly Christian population would also seem to bolster its capacity to deter terrorist activity.

Yet a number of domestic factors appear to trump such disincentives, making Kenya a more positive environment for al-Qa'ida. One is the presence of small but significant Arab, Arab-Swahili and Somali minorities concentrated in coastal Kenya, Nairobi and several other urban centers.²⁴ Some of these, especially those with Arab lines of descent, maintain closer ties with their home countries. Indeed, many residents of Mombasa, Malindi and Lamu hold stronger ties with the Arabian Peninsula than with Kenya's own interior.²⁵ These historical connections and the cover provided by a diverse population significantly reduce the visibility of foreign operatives.

Deep-rooted and continuing shared economic interests strengthen the coastal Kenya-Arab relationship still further.²⁶ The centuries-old maritime culture along the East African coast has given rise to many interlocking networks of kinship and commerce that the "modern" national borders of the Comoros, Zanzibar, mainland Tanzania, Kenya, Somalia, Oman and Yemen have not obliterated.²⁷ Further, modern transportation and communication that fosters rapid and detailed transmission of both political and religious information and messages significantly bolster this situation.²⁸ The net effect of all the above is that al-Qa'ida operatives have been able to employ a mixture of "mosque, madrasah, marriage"²⁹ and money to move about relatively freely while establishing more permanent local roots.³⁰

Beyond these regional, historical and demographic factors, Kenya's weak governance climate makes a considerable contribution to the country's terrorist threat. Central here is its lack of effectiveness in investigating, arresting and convicting terrorists as well as more ordinary

²³ Indeed, it may be this very stability, accommodating, among other things, an extremely high U.S. diplomatic interest and presence that has served to attract terrorists. See Carson, *op. cit.*, 178 and 192. On terrorists, see Otenyo, "New Terrorism," 8.

²⁴ North Eastern Province, inhabited almost entirely of ethnic Somalis, has apparently produced no al-Qa'ida outposts or associates, possibly due to the relative dearth of attractive targets.

²⁵ Carson, "Kenya," 186.

²⁶ Such shared interests sometimes overlapped with terrorist connections. Omar Said Omar had a "friend" from his home city of Mombasa (Issa Osman Issa) who "had relatives in Somalia." The friend took him to Mdoa where the two set up a lobster business in 1998. "Statement Under Inquiry of Omar Said Omar," Recorded by Superintendent John Mulalulu, Kenya Anti-Terrorist Police Unit, n.d. (but almost certainly August, 2003). See Appendix C-III.

²⁷ On historical ties, see R. A. Obudho, "Urbanization," in J. Hoorveg, D. Foeken and R. A. Obudho, eds., *Kenya Coast Handbook* (Munster: Lit Verlag, 2000), 85-97.

²⁸ The influence of external Islamic teaching is described in Mohamed Bakari, "The New 'Ulama in Kenya," in Mohamed Bakari and Saad S. Yahya, eds., *Islam in Kenya: Proceedings of the National Seminar on Contemporary Islam in Kenya* (Nairobi: Mewa Publications, 1995), 168-193.

²⁹ See Andrew England, "FBI's most wanted leader of al-Qaida cell indicted for U.S. Embassy bombings, escaped," *Associated Press*, June 14, 2004.

³⁰ Recall here the case of one of the first al-Qa'ida operatives in Kenya, Mohamed Sadeek Odeh (see below), a Palestinian from Jordan who arrived in the mid-1990s. He settled in Witu, Lamu District. He later married there and set up a seafood supply business, obtaining a supply contract at Nairobi's 5-star Grand Regency Hotel. He was arrested in Pakistan the day after the 1998 U.S. Embassy bombing, having flown out of Kenya the day before, and later convicted in connection with that attack at a trial in New York.

criminals. While mundane bureaucratic ineptitude no doubt accounts for some of this, the general “culture of impunity” that has been said to reign in Kenya may be equally responsible.³¹ For example, not a single (credible) conviction has been obtained with regard to the several assassinations and mysterious deaths of leading political figures.³² The same applies to the “mass” killings of the 1990s that killed 1,500 and displaced several hundred thousand, as well as to the countless victims of torture in various detention centers and police cells, beginning after the failed Air Force coup attempt of 1982 and continuing well into the 1990s.³³ The current government shelved recommendations from a recent Presidential Commission for a “transitional-justice” process of exposure, confession and national healing.³⁴ In addition, despite local and diplomatic demands, the Kenyan government provided no explanation for either the March 2006 police raid on the offices of *The Standard* newspaper and its sister company Kenya Television Network, or for the breach of security at Nairobi’s international airport several months later. At the airport, the same pair of mysterious “Armenian brothers” who led *The Standard* raid—allegedly business partners of Kibaki family members—stormed the Customs area to insure that associates arriving from abroad would not have their luggage searched.³⁵

This history of impunity extends in particular to those involved in large-scale corruption. Kenya repeatedly finds itself among the most corrupt countries in the world. According to Transparency International, bribery “costs Kenyans about US \$1 billion each year, yet more than half live on less than US \$2 per day.”³⁶ No senior public figure in either politics or the civil service has ever been convicted, let alone gone to prison, for abuse of office.³⁷ The current government’s own former anti-corruption “czar” now resides in self-imposed exile in the UK, having feared for his life as he attempted to investigate corruption among the very government he was serving.³⁸ Corruption also makes it easier for terrorists to use airports and other official

³¹ Joel D. Barkan, “Kenya After Moi,” *Foreign Affairs* 83:1 (2004): 87-101.

³² Prominent examples are: Pia Gama Pinto (a key advisor to Kenya’s first vice-president, Oginga Odinga, in 1965); Tom Mboya (Minister for Economic Development, in 1969); J. M. Kariuki (‘renegade’ MP and President Kenyatta’s former Personal Secretary, in 1975); and Robert Ouko (Minister for Foreign Affairs, in 1990).

³³ Peter M. Kagwanja, *Killing the Vote: State-Sponsored Violence and Flawed Elections in Kenya* (Nairobi: Kenya Human Rights Commission, 1998); Republic of Kenya, “Report of the Judicial Commission appointed to inquire into tribal clashes in Kenya” (Nairobi: Government Printer, 2002); People Against Torture, *Never Again: Profiles in Courage* (Nairobi: People Against Torture, 2005).

³⁴ Republic of Kenya, “Report of the Task Force on the Establishment of a Truth Justice and Reconciliation Commission” (Nairobi: Government Printer, 2003). The commission’s recommendations were reportedly never even brought to Cabinet for discussion.

³⁵ The police raids involved the roughing-up of staff, destruction and theft of valuable equipment, and burning of newspapers. See John Kamau and Cyrus Ombati, “Armenians: The Inside Story,” *Sunday Standard*, June 11, 2006; “Artur brothers arrested after airport gun drama,” *Saturday Standard*, June 10, 2006.

³⁶ *Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index 2006*, 3 (6 November 2006). Available at: http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2006.

³⁷ Ironically, al-Qa’ida operatives in Kenya during the early 1990s complained about the costs imposed on them by corruption: “Kenya is not a good place ... as the cost of living is high, plus corruption is dangerously prevalent” (Harmony, AFGP-2002-800597, 7).

³⁸ John Githongo, former Executive Director of Transparency International-Kenya. For details on corruption issues during Kibaki’s first two years in office, see S. Kichamu Akivaga, “Anti-Corruption Politics in the Post-KANU Era,” in Ben Sihanya, ed., *Control of Corruption in Kenya: Legal-Political Dimensions, 2001-2004* (Nairobi: Claripress, 2005), 242-283. Regarding the Kibaki government’s failure (so far) to hold to account former President Moi or anyone connected with his 24-year rule, see Thomas P. Wolf “Accountability or Immunity?: Daniel Toroitich arap Moi, Kenya’s First Retired President,” in Roger Southall and Henning Melber, eds., *Legacies of Power: Leadership Change and Former Presidents in African Politics*, (Upsalla: Nordic Africa Institute, 2006) 197-

border points and to obtain identity papers and travel documents.³⁹ Testimony in the 1998 Embassy bombing trial revealed that Mohamed Sadeek Odeh used fake travel documents obtained at a government Immigration office to leave Kenya the night before the attack.⁴⁰ Omar Said Omar, one of those allegedly involved in the 2002 coast attacks, also claimed he used a fake Ethiopian passport to get back into Kenya in December 2001 after completing his al-Qa'ida weapons training in Mogadishu.⁴¹

Corruption may also have played a part in the failure to arrest and/or prosecute non-al-Qa'ida terrorists and other international criminals. Two examples stand out. The first is Abdallah Ocalan, for many years the leader of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), the main Kurdish rebel group. According to reports, a foreign security team arrested him while he was being escorted to Nairobi's airport to board a "safe flight" out of the country. Reports alleged that two senior figures in the Moi government received \$40 million from the Turkish government for allowing this.⁴² The second example is Felicien Kabuga, previously Rwanda's wealthiest private businessman and today its most wanted genocide fugitive.⁴³ Despite a large U.S. government bounty of \$5 million for his arrest, Kabuga reportedly made his home in Kenya for many years with the knowledge and support of senior figures in first the Moi government, and now that of his successor Kibaki.⁴⁴

The examples above, taken together with Kenya's weak record in apprehending, holding and prosecuting high-profile terrorism suspects,⁴⁵ apparently serves as a serious disincentive for Kenyans contemplating going to the authorities, whether with regard to issues of general "public safety"⁴⁶ or indeed, their own problems.⁴⁷ A final governance issue that also seems to contribute to the government's inadequacies in this area, is, ironically, a reflection of the recent expansion

232

³⁹ See Harmony, AFGP-2002-800611, for an example of a Kenyan document seized in Afghanistan.

⁴⁰ *U.S. v. Usama Bin Laden et al.*, S(9) 98 Cr. 1023, S.D.N.Y. Indictment, 29-31.

⁴¹ See his confession-statement in Appendix C-III.

⁴² Author interview, Nairobi, October 12, 2006. Another analyst claimed that Turkey paid an unnamed private mercenary group to capture Ocalan. Eric Margolis, "Freedom, Not Fake Autonomy for Kosovo," February, 1999. Available at www.ericmargolis.com/archives/1999/02.

⁴³ He is also said to have been one of the main sponsors of the Hutu *Interahamwe* killing-squads who, by some accounts, were involved in the pre-election killing-raids at the Kenya coast in August, 1997; Human Rights Watch, *Playing With Fire: Weapons Proliferation, Political Violence, and Human Rights in Kenya* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2002), 55-56.

⁴⁴ "Disguised Kabuga still hiding in Kenya," *Weekly Citizen*, 10:14 (14-19 March 2007): 2; Evans Wafula, *Africa News*, February 21, 2007; Dedan Walsh, "Informant killed in failed sting to trap genocide suspect," *The Independent*, January 22, 2003.

⁴⁵ The case of Fazul's escape a day after his June 2004 arrest in Mombasa is relevant here (England, *op. cit.*), as is the acquittal of all suspects in the twin 2002 Coast attacks. See "A Year Later, Two Mombasa Attacks Suspects Released," *IslamOnline.net*, Article 2, November 28, 2003. See also Republic of Kenya, Criminal Division, High Court of Kenya, "Ruling," Criminal Case No. 91 of 2003, June 8, 2005.

⁴⁶ Whether the recent arrest of a high-profile al-Qa'ida suspect in Mombasa marks a change in this regard remains to be seen. In this case, a foreign-exchange dealer pressed a "panic" button because of "nervous behavior" of the customer in front of him. See "Kenyans make arrest in 2002 Israeli plane, hotel attacks," CNN.com (AP), March 19, 2006. Identified in this report as Saleh Ali Nabhan, it later emerged he was Mohamed Abdul Malik, identified by Omar as the driver of the vehicle involved in the missile attack on the Israeli airliner in 2002. See Appendix C-III, and below.

⁴⁷ A nationally representative survey undertaken on behalf of the government found that only 40 percent of the victims of all types of crime report these to the police, for a variety of reasons. Republic of Kenya, Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, "GJLOS National Household Baseline Survey," 2006, 49.

of the country's "democratic space." Kenya returned to competitive, multi-party politics in 1992 after more than three decades of either de facto or de jure one-party rule. Over the last three national elections, intense competition for votes in both parliamentary and presidential contests reflects in part the country's highly fluid partisan political landscape. According to Kenyan election law, victory in presidential contests requires a candidate obtain both an overall plurality and a minimum of 25 percent of the vote in at least five of Kenya's eight provinces. Muslims currently hold a great deal of collective political "clout" as they constitute at least 90 percent of inhabitants in North Eastern Province and over a quarter of the population in Coast Province. Because any incumbent or would-be government can ill-afford to ignore Muslim voters, counterterrorism policies that antagonize this section of the population are unlikely to be pursued with anything but considerable reluctance.

This issue of political sensitivity may well have influenced the government's response to one of the attacks described above: that on the HOPE-FM station in May 2006. Notwithstanding its clearly religious overtones, the official government spokesman, Dr. Alfred Mutua, called the attack "normal thuggery," going on to claim the attackers were the "same gang" that had been "molesting motorists" in the area, a view immediately disputed by the Minister for Information.⁴⁸ Although Mutua simultaneously promised "a thorough investigation," nothing more has been heard of the matter.⁴⁹ In this context, one Western diplomat may be justified in his view that, "even if the Kenyan government were seriously committed to apprehending and convicting these terrorists, whether they are foreigners or locals, it fears antagonizing the entire Muslim community."⁵⁰

One particular element of the reform program with which the current Kibaki government came to power appears particularly relevant to terrorism. In July 2003, new rules of evidence were established for criminal trials setting stricter requirements for the admission of confessions as evidence in court. Specifically, the rules require that these confessions be made before judges and magistrates (and only before the former, in the case of murder), rather than before police officers, who were said to commonly use torture. This new requirement resulted in the prosecution's main evidence in the 2002 Coast attacks case, a confession made to the police by one of the suspects during the first week of August, being thrown out after it was challenged by the defense attorneys.⁵¹

IV. The Wider Context: The Muslim Situation in Kenya

Previously, we noted that foreign jihadis can move relatively unnoticed and may receive at least some sympathy for their objectives from certain parts of the Kenyan population.⁵² This section takes a more focused look at the political character of Kenya's Muslims, especially at the coast. Much of this population nurses a profound sense of grievance against the Kenyan state. While

⁴⁸ Cyrus Ombati, "Hooded thugs strike radio station, kill guard," *Sunday Standard*, May 14, 2006.

⁴⁹ In this case, it was reported that several Christian and Muslim leaders were brought together by the Mombasa police to "deal with this matter quietly." Exactly what was resolved remains unclear. Author interview, Nairobi, 14 March 2007.

⁵⁰ Author interview, Nairobi, February 20, 2007.

⁵¹ The law came into effect on July 25. How soon the police learned about this change, and whether during the course of the trial any attempt was made to have the accused re-state this confession in accordance with the new rules, is not known; for other aspects of this issue, see a copy of this confession in Appendix C-III.

⁵² Certain portions of the population may support the ends but not necessarily the means of foreign terrorists.

most assert that terrorists tend not to be especially disadvantaged, there is some connection between such grievances and support for terrorism in cross-national studies.⁵³ At the very least, such disaffection increases the probability that foreign jihadis will be tolerated.

The poverty affecting so many Kenyans combined with the history of the coast in relation to the rest of Kenya comprises the root of this disaffection.⁵⁴ Its foundation lies in the “status inversion” that an important section of the coastal community experienced following the transition from colonial rule to independence.⁵⁵ To simplify a very complex reality, its Arab and Arab-Swahili leadership went from being highly privileged under the British, to being subjects of a largely alien, up-country, and non-Muslim political elite.⁵⁶ A critical aspect of this reversal of relative status was the aversion to Christian mission-dominated education, so that Muslims became, in retrospect, “the first to read (i.e., the Koran), but the last to go to school.” This placed Muslims at a distinct disadvantage in the post-independence competition for formal employment in both the public and private sectors.⁵⁷

More recently, the opening up of the political space since the return to multi-party politics in 1992 has had an ambiguous effect on Kenya’s Muslims. On the one hand, it led to increased participation in public life through attendance at public meetings and demonstrations, the initiation of civic education programs, and contributions to the effort to revise or replace the country’s constitution.⁵⁸ Such opportunities give Muslims greater influence in national political life, and thus should reduce the frustrations of exclusion and marginalization. However, given the community’s inferior competitive power, especially in the economic sphere, it is unclear whether increased “voice” will lead to more radicalism as a consequence of the frustration of popular demands, or more support for the current system.⁵⁹

That some Kenyan Muslim leaders, such as Mombasa Imam Sheikh Ali Shee, call bin Laden “a hero” should not be taken as a sign that a radicalization process that legitimizes

⁵³ For a good recent piece of research on grievances, poverty, and support for terrorism see C. Christine Fair and Bryan Shepherd, “Who Supports Terrorism? Evidence from Fourteen Muslim Countries,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 29 (2006): 51-74.

⁵⁴ Over half of the population is said to remain below the official poverty line.

⁵⁵ Donal B. Cruise O'Brien, “Coping With the Christians: The Muslim Predicament in Kenya,” in Holger Bernt Hansen and Michael Twaddle, eds., *Religion and Politics in East Africa*, (London: James Currey, 1995), 204, 201-2.

⁵⁶ Thomas P. Wolf, “Contemporary Politics,” in Hoorveg et al., *op. cit.*, 129-155.

⁵⁷ Some have also argued that the academic burden of following two courses of study at the same time (one in school, the other in the madrasa) also constitutes an impediment to secular educational success.

⁵⁸ Mohamed Bakari, “A Place at the Table: The Political Integration of Kenyan Muslims, 1992-2003,” paper presented at the International Conference on “The Political Economy of Kenya,” St. Anthony’s College, Oxford, June, 2004. This is so notwithstanding the government of Kenya’s refusal in the early 1990s to register the coast-based Islamic Party of Kenya that nevertheless found opportunities to determine a number of races through an alliance with another (non-sectarian) political party. Thomas P. Wolf, “Contemporary Politics,” in Hoorveg et al., *op. cit.*, 141-143.

⁵⁹ Both currents were clearly visible in the recent constitutional reform debates concerning a number of issues, including both the secular one of devolution, and the religious one of the position of the qadis’ courts (i.e., the *sharia* courts).

violence is winning out.⁶⁰ In the view of one Western scholar who has spent considerable time among the coast's Muslim community:

Bin Laden may have garnered admiration in Tanzania and Kenya, but he has not won the sympathy of Muslims.... [H]e symbolizes for East African Muslims the resistance against the global political and economic hegemony of the United States. Bin Laden is known as someone who has dared to stand up on his own against the world's No. 1 superpower. The people praise his courage, but not his actions. They admire him as a pop icon, but not as a "holy warrior." How strongly Bin Laden's Islamic legitimization for terror is rejected in the East African region is reflected in the fact that Kenyan and Tanzanian Muslims continue to argue that the true perpetrators of the World Trade Center attack could never be Muslims, as Islam prohibits such violence.⁶¹

Few Kenyan Muslim leaders or their followers appear willing to condone violence.⁶² Indeed, they see it as inimical to their individual and collective purposes, if not simply morally wrong. Yet the perceived lack of integrity in the country's security and judicial apparatus, combined with an antipathy to being seen as a partner with "the enemies of Islam" makes a true partnership with the government on the terrorism issue even more problematic.

Despite the basically pacifistic inclinations of most of the population, the Kenyan coastal Islamic "sea" is certainly one that a few stealthy al-Qa'ida zealots used to good advantage. Taking this portrait into account with the inciting impact of external issues,⁶³ one might ask why so few attacks have occurred in Kenya and why so few Kenyans have been involved; rather than why they have occurred at all.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Ironically, Shee is among a select group of Kenyans selected as "Democracy Fellows" during the 1990s by a USAID-funded study program in the U.S. aimed at acquainting current and potential future leaders with the institutions and processes of American democracy.

⁶¹ Rudiger Seeseman, "East African Muslims After 9/11," paper presented at the African Studies Association Annual Conference, New Orleans, November 17-20, 2004. At the same time, it could be argued that an even greater distancing from at least the methods employed by al-Qa'ida would be needed before these same people were to accept that the perpetrators of these attacks *were* Muslims, and then disown them.

⁶² The recent interviews transcribed in Appendix C-II provide a portrait of Kenyan Muslims' views on relevant issues. Comparing these interviews with the results of other surveys of this section of the Kenyan population contributes to a more accurate and nuanced understanding of Muslim grievances in Kenya.

⁶³ Oded notes three factors he considers more salient here: the oil boom of the 1970s and concomitant petro-dollars in the hands of Arab/Muslim benefactors for supporting communal causes throughout the Islamic world; the 1979 Iranian revolution with its impact on Islamic expansionist activity generally; and Kenya's own more recent process of democratization, in which the mobilizing of public support behind all issues becomes a more valuable "good." Oded, *op. cit.*, 8. Other factors include the ongoing Israel-Palestinian conflict and the highly visible (and controversial) use of American military power in such settings as Kuwait (1991), Afghanistan (2001-present), and Iraq (2003-present).

⁶⁴ For an analysis of this question with regard to the U.S. itself, see John Mueller, "Is There Still a Terrorist Threat?: The Myth of the Omnipresent Enemy," *Foreign Affairs* 85:5 (2006): 2-8.

V. The US-Kenya Anti-Terror Partnership: Protecting Kenyans, or Targeting Kenya's Muslims?

United States counterterrorism efforts in Kenya expanded significantly after the 1998 Embassy bombing.⁶⁵ In addition to joint military training exercises in North Eastern Province and in the Coast Province's Lamu District, U.S.-Kenyan counterterrorism efforts include: the establishment of the National Security Intelligence Service with support from the U.S. Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA) Program; creation of the Anti-Terrorism Police Unit (ATPU) in 1998, a Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) and the National Counter-Terrorism Center (NCTC) in 2003;⁶⁶ and the National Security Advisory Committee (NSAC) in 2004. Altogether, these measures aimed to improve Kenyan capacity to investigate incidents, identify operatives and coordinate relevant work across agencies involved in counterterrorism.⁶⁷ Additional measures include participation in the U.S. Terrorist Interdiction Program (TIP), which provides technology to screen travelers arriving at airports and border crossings. With support from the Federal Aviation Administration, Kenya has improved airport security and worked with Uganda and Tanzania to harmonize regional aviation security regulations. Kenya also ratified or acceded to all twelve United Nations conventions on terrorism and continues to submit regular reports to the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee. Finally, beyond its bilateral cooperation with the United States, Kenya continues as an active member of the African Union. In this endeavor, Kenya reaffirmed its commitment to the 1999 Organization of African Unity Convention on Preventing and Combating Terrorism and established the African Centre for Studies and Research on Terrorism.

However impressive this list may appear, it is not clear how deep the Kenyan government's participation in the "War on Terror" can actually be. Kenyan leaders must take into account a key issue that goes beyond "security": their political standing among their own citizens, both Muslim and non-Muslim.⁶⁸ Close cooperation with America creates serious political liabilities stemming from a number of grievances.⁶⁹ First, the periodic and visible presence of FBI agents and U.S. Marines along the coast has left many Muslims feeling targeted by U.S. policy. Recent U.S. military actions just over the Kenyan border in Somalia, combined

⁶⁵ Beth Elize Whitaker, "Reluctant Partners: The United States and Kenya in the War on Terror," paper presented at the International Studies Association Annual Conference, Chicago, February 28-March 3, 2007; Carson, *op. cit.*, 176-80.

⁶⁶ The JTTF basically ceased to function after the Kenya Commissioner of Police, General Hussein Ali, removed the Anti-Terrorist Police Unit from it in 2005, to the dismay of American and several other diplomatic missions. Author interview, Nairobi, March 24, 2007.

⁶⁷ It is likely that absent these steps, the planned June 2003 attack on the U.S. Embassy would not have been foiled. A Western diplomat who has followed more recent anti-terrorist efforts of the Kenyan government was unimpressed with them, though he was unable to explain their general failure in terms of a single factor. "More likely," he said, "it is a combination of (1) turf-struggles between competing bureaucratic (and thus financial) interests and thus an inability to concentrate decision-making authority effectively in one place, (2) incompetence in terms of insufficient resources, and (3) corruption." Author interview, Nairobi, February 9, 2007.

⁶⁸ In a recent nationally representative public opinion poll, the government received a combined positive rating of 42 percent ("very satisfied"; "satisfied") on its handling of terrorism issues. This constituted 9th place out of the 15 policy-areas so ranked. "March SPEC Poll," The Steadman Group, Nairobi, 2007.

⁶⁹ Much of the following material is taken from Beth Elize Whitaker, "Reluctant Partners: The United States and Kenya in the War on Terror."

with the Kenyan government's unsympathetic response to Somalis seeking refuge in Kenya, reinforce this sentiment.⁷⁰

Second, there is lingering bitterness about the level of compensation for the Kenyan victims of the 1998 Embassy bombing. This relates to the more general conviction among Kenyans that their country has become a terrorist target specifically because of its close relationship with the United States. Reflecting this belief, 5,000 Kenyans filed a class action lawsuit in a U.S. district court in 2002 seeking compensation for their losses.⁷¹

Third, the focus on terrorism angers Kenyans who see their country suffering from a variety of ills. Of these ills, terrorism places low on their list of concerns.⁷² The U.S. State Department's frequent travel advisories reinforce this grievance. Many Kenyans see them as economic punishment to their tourist industry, now the country's leading foreign-exchange earner, while serving to divide Kenyans on a sectarian basis.⁷³

Fourth, the perceived hand of the U.S. in the Kenyan government's efforts to steer unpopular anti-terrorism legislation through the National Assembly has not made open cooperation easier. Many Kenyans viewed the initial version of the bill as an effort to roll back vital human rights gains of recent years. Even after heated protests from both Muslim and non-Muslim human rights organizations led to the removal of its most abrasive provisions, resistance to the bill remains sufficient to deter the government from backing it with any real commitment.⁷⁴ Nevertheless, the association of such legislation with U.S. policy damages the credibility of both the American and Kenyan governments.

The final issue concerns just how much information about the two countries' anti-terrorist efforts should be made public. American officials seem inclined towards more disclosure than their Kenyan counterparts. Given that any successes achieved constitute clear political gains for Washington, this is not surprising. However, when Kenya is seen to be "caving-in" to pressure by violating Kenyan law, the cost is considerable. The recent capture of M.A. Malik, a participant in the 2002 Paradise Hotel attack, provides an illustrative example of this phenomenon. Reportedly, Malik's transfer to American custody for relocation to Guantanamo

⁷⁰ Numerous press reports detailed both the military action, the plight of the refugees, and the public (including Muslim) reaction. These were expressed by several speakers and numerous members of the audience at a recent public event. Kenya National Commission of Human Rights' forum, Hilton Hotel, Nairobi, February 9, 2007. Out of 76 cases tracked, 17 of these refugees are known to have been "deported" to Somalia (most to unknown fates both there and in Ethiopia to which a number were subsequently sent), with the remainder still in Kenyan custody, as of the end of January ("Somali Crisis: Arrests Data", Muslim Human Rights Forum, Nairobi, n.d.).

⁷¹ The suit was thrown out on the grounds that the claimants had provided no proof that the U.S. was responsible or had violated a specific law or policy. Similar unhappiness remains among those affected by the Kikambala hotel bombing, though in this case it is directed at Israel. Author interview, Majengo, Kikambala, March 8, 2007.

⁷² Beth Elize Whitaker, "Reluctant Partners," 23.

⁷³ Salim Lone, "Terror alerts provide cause to alienate some communities," *Daily Nation*, March 9, 2007, 11. The advisories do not seem to be having much of an effect; according to just-released figures, 78,000 Americans arrived in Kenya last year, an all-time high; Statement by Minister of Foreign Affairs, R. Tuju, on the Nation TV (NTV) program, "On the Spot," 8 March, 2007.

⁷⁴ Whitaker, "Reluctant Partners," 11-13. Ironically, according to a prominent human rights lawyer-activist, it is the very absence of such a law that, however onerous, has encouraged even more deleterious consequences, as the Kenyan police operate "totally outside current law" as they pursue "a U.S.-driven agenda." Author interview, Nairobi, March 9, 2007.

Bay came with an understanding that the transfer would not be made public. Malik's arrival in Cuba became headline news triggering considerable outrage in Kenya.⁷⁵ Likewise, Malik's arrest reportedly led to the discovery of plans to stage an attack in Mombasa during the international cross-country championships to be held there a few days later.⁷⁶ The U.S. Embassy felt obliged to announce the possibility of "a serious terrorist threat" during the forthcoming event. However, Kenya's Internal Security Minister, with his eyes clearly on the international gallery associated with the event, rejected the warning as without justification.⁷⁷

Altogether, such issues underscore the divergence of interests between Kenya and the U.S.⁷⁸ As Whitaker points out, the U.S., in deed if not in word, "has made clear that its top priority in Kenya is counter-terrorism."⁷⁹ However, most Kenyans seek a combination of improved security regarding "normal" criminal activity, economic development, and further consolidation of their fledgling democracy.⁸⁰ Even when U.S. support for these other goals is forthcoming, the American focus on counterterrorism encourages cynical Kenyans to see any investment in these areas as diplomatic-donor "bribery."⁸¹

VI. Different Games in the War on Terror

One way to think about the War on Terrorism in Kenya is as a set of three related games. In one game, the players are the U.S. and Kenyan governments. For the U.S., the game is about undermining al-Qa'ida and its local adjuncts. In Kenya, this entails convincing the Kenyan authorities and ordinary people of the importance of American anti-terrorism objectives. For Kenya, this game is more problematic. On the one hand, Kenya seeks to maximize the material benefits derived from its partnership with the United States which they employ for well-established neo-patrimonial purposes.⁸² At the same time, however, Kenya seeks to minimize three accompanying costs: (1) the loss of political support from its citizens in an increasingly

⁷⁵ "Family demands suspect's return: Pentagon confirms man in Cuba as US envoy in Nairobi alleges speculation," *Daily Nation*, March 29, 2007.

⁷⁶ Author interview, international news agency representative, Nairobi, March 26, 2007.

⁷⁷ "Kenya indignant over U.S. terror alert ahead of global sports event," *People's Daily Online* (Xinhau), March 8, 2007. The attack plans were never made public. The fact that no incident occurred made the Americans look unduly alarmist, and thus uncaring about the positive publicity Kenya would gain from the successful holding of this event. However, the possibility of an attack might have been quite likely. See Appendix C-IV for an account of Muslim grievances and its relation to this event.

⁷⁸ Such divergence has not gone completely unrecognized. The U.S. military commander in Djibouti is reported as having resolved "never to use the word 'terror' in meetings with African security heads." Rather, "he speaks only about 'insecurity' and 'extremism' when he meets such officials." Author interview, Nairobi, March 23, 2007.

⁷⁹ Whitaker, "Reluctant Partners," 23.

⁸⁰ In a recent national survey undertaken on behalf of the Ministry of Justice's Governance, Justice, Law and Order Sector (GJLOS) program, not one of the 12,442 respondents mentioned terrorism as a threat, even in Coast Province. This includes all responses grouped in the "other" category as well. Republic of Kenya, Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, GJLOS National Household Baseline Survey, 2006, 56. See the largely similar results in Volker Krause and Eric E. Otenyo, "Terrorism and the Kenyan Public," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 28:2 (2005): 99-112.

⁸¹ Whitaker, "Reluctant Partners," 5.

⁸² Kenya was one of only 5 states to receive special training through the Anti-Terrorism Assistance Program in the 2005 budget. The program divided \$88 million among these states in 2005 and \$122 million was requested for the program in the 2006 budget. Kenya was the only country in the Horn to receive these funds. See <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/60647.pdf> [accessed March 31, 2007]. On this phenomenon more generally in Third World states, see, Christopher Clapham, *Third World Politics: An Introduction* (London: Croom Helm, 1985).

competitive electoral environment;⁸³ (2) their higher profile as a legitimate target which accompanies close association with the U.S.; and (3) the concern that too much of a “buy-in” to terrorism concerns will hurt the vital tourism industry.⁸⁴

Less visibly, reducing cooperation with American anti-terrorism efforts may also be a card to be played with regard to other distant issues. The Commissioner of Police in 2005 pulled the Anti-Terrorist Police Unit out of the Joint Terrorism Task Force. Some saw this as a jab at the U.S. and its allies who were pressuring the Kibaki government to move firmly against corruption involving some of his closest associates.⁸⁵ Kenya successfully parlayed its centrality in the War on Terror into other diplomatic advantages. In mid-2005, Kenya refused to ratify a bilateral immunity agreement promising not to turn American citizens over to the International Criminal Court in The Hague. In response, the Bush administration initially mandated substantial cuts to military and governance programs in Kenya. Later, the U.S. restored much of the money in late 2006.⁸⁶ As these examples show, the Global War on Terror provides a most welcome resource-pool. However, Kenya’s incentives in that war are not fully aligned with those of the U.S.

The second game occurs between the Kenyan government and the Muslim community.⁸⁷ For its part, the Government would prefer to avoid antagonizing its Muslim citizens. Beyond the obvious electoral disadvantages, officials fear that doing so will make Kenyan Muslims more sympathetic to the terrorists’ agenda(s). For their part, significant sections of the Muslim leadership see the often-clumsy efforts of the Government’s security apparatus and its partnership with the U.S. more generally as a useful means of bolstering their own status as defenders of Islam and Muslims’ human rights. That no Kenyan has yet been convicted on any charge directly related to the terrorist attacks that have occurred makes such posturing much more credible.⁸⁸ At the same time, playing the role of sectarian defender attracts applause and valuable resources from certain philanthropic individuals, organizations and even governments

⁸³ With the opposition quick to call for greater attention to national pride and “sovereignty” in Kenya’s relations with foreign powers, aggressively supporting American counterterrorism efforts risks alienating several important voting blocs. Non-Muslim aspirants are equally adept at taking advantage of such grievances, as opposition presidential aspirant M. Mudavadi did recently at a public rally in Lamu Town. Public Rally, Orange Democratic Movement-Kenya, Lamu Town, March 4, 2007.

⁸⁴ It’s not clear that close U.S. allies are targeted more often, but this is certainly the perception in Kenya, especially in light of the Madrid and London attacks which appeared to be clearly linked to support for U.S. policies.

⁸⁵ This came in the wake of anti-corruption “czar” Githongo’s flight into exile. “Clay’s Parting Shot,” *The People Daily*, July 2, 2005. Indeed, some well-placed individuals even viewed the government’s “mis-handling” of the Mombasa/Kikambala attacks’ trial as a “lesson to the Americans” in these terms. Author interview, Nairobi, March 26, 2007. More generally, such distaste for the West’s governance agenda has been evident in efforts to develop ties with China. Leading government figures have recently boasted that Western donors’ contribution to the Kenyan budget has been reduced to only about 5 percent.

⁸⁶ Whitaker, *op. cit.*, 15-17; *Africa Research Bulletin* 16639.

⁸⁷ Although there is some overlap, there are actually three largely separate games involved: with the ethnic Somali population of North Eastern Province, the mainly ethnic Somali (and Somali refugee) population of the Eastleigh section of Nairobi, and the coastal Swahili and Arab communities, both of which have their own important boundaries/divisions. See Appendix C-IV for a Mombasa example of the rhetoric employed by Muslim leaders in their exchanges with the government.

⁸⁸ This failure made it possible for one Nairobi-based Muslim NGO official to claim, for example, that “we did our own investigation of the Mombasa attacks and found that no Kenyans were involved.” (Author interview, Nairobi, March 2, 2007).

in the wider Islamic world.⁸⁹ Taken together, this implies that Kenya's Muslim terrorism threat-level is not without some benefit to its Muslim leaders (whether or not this is consciously recognized as such). That is, the Government's propensity to engage in or allow periodic provocative actions provides various opportunities for them to mobilize their followers.⁹⁰

The U.S. and Kenyan Muslims play a third game. American intelligence forces are presumably trying to penetrate certain sections of the country's Muslim communities so as to discover and apprehend terrorists and their sympathizers. Meanwhile other American agencies seek to mollify the Muslim population at the coast and elsewhere, through a combination of community aid projects, meetings with local leaders and more general public pronouncements.⁹¹ Such efforts appear to be generally appreciated. Most Muslims are not averse to receiving material assistance from the U.S.⁹² At the same time, as with the Kenya government, Muslim leaders know they can gain extra points among their followers and foreign benefactors by "standing up" to U.S. actions when provided with opportunities that encourage them to do so.

In each game, there are strong reasons why the best outcome from a counterterrorism perspective is unlikely to occur. However, some repackaging of desirable policies can reduce the incentives for Kenyan leaders, both in the government and in Muslim communities, to behave differently than the U.S. would like. In Chapter 5, we will outline some recommendations the U.S. might consider when designing policy with regard to Kenya.

VII: Conclusion: A Fragile Present and an Uncertain Future

Kenya's location on the map of international terrorism is not likely to change in the foreseeable future. Kenya remains only peripheral in al-Qa'ida's grand scheme, seen more as a battlefield than a future stronghold. The goal in Kenya seems limited to attacking symbols of "enemy" power and conducting logistical operations. Notwithstanding such modest aims, their capacity for attacks remains considerable, especially when compared with other Horn of Africa settings. Kenya provides attractive and numerous Western targets in a vulnerable security and governance environment. With rampant corruption, porous borders, weak investigative and prosecutorial systems, and a population within which foreign jihadis can move with a fair degree of anonymity while finding some sympathy for their causes, Kenya hosts all the necessary elements for a terrorist safe haven.

While investment by the United States can increase the Kenyan government's counterterrorism capacity, its commitment to this agenda remains somewhat equivocal. The central dilemma is that the incentives of the two governments are not aligned. As described in Chapter 2, efforts to combat terrorism generate a considerable supply of resources for the Kenyan government. Because aid appears to have been pegged to the perceived terrorism risk

⁸⁹ Not all such philanthropists feel this way. One group in the Gulf was hesitant to help fund a new Islamic University at the coast without U.S. Embassy assurances that this would not be seen as support for "Islamic radicalism" in Kenya. Author interview, Nairobi, August 4, 2006.

⁹⁰ See Appendix C-IV for a copy of a letter from the Council of Imams in Mombasa to the Kenyan Minister of Defense.

⁹¹ Most recently, this involved arranging discussion-meetings between New York Times analyst and author Thomas Friedman and various Muslim leaders. Author interview, April 3, 2007.

⁹² Several civic leaders and other respondents in Lamu recently expressed nothing but satisfaction with the projects undertaken by U.S. Marines in the area which mainly involve physical repairs/improvements to local schools and health centers. Author interviews: Mombasa, March 8, 2007; Lamu, March 5, 2007.

rather than to the level of counterterrorism effort, Kenyan officials have incentives to tolerate a low level of terrorism. Moreover, close cooperation with the U.S. entails significant costs for the Kenyan government.⁹³ Terrorism is simply a much higher priority for the U.S. and certain other Western diplomatic missions in Kenya than it is for Kenyans themselves.⁹⁴ For them, insecurity, disease, and above all, poverty are the most ominous threats. Addressing these threats more aggressively may pay great counterterrorism dividends by reducing the political costs of supporting U.S. policy and thereby aligning the preferences of the Kenyan and American governments which would also be most welcomed by the Kenyan people.

Even if few Kenyans have joined the jihadi cause (some have), others are likely to continue to do so. But this seems to depend much more upon issues and contacts elsewhere than inside Kenya itself. To this extent, efforts to ameliorate the conditions in which Kenyan Muslims find themselves may bear little fruit in terms of direct deterrence. Similarly, it is not clear whether socio-economic improvement per se would eliminate the kind of religious motivation that prompted the HOPE-FM attack, the only entirely indigenous attack to date.

One final issue bears consideration. In the previous Harmony report, we stressed the importance of efforts that would help alienate terrorists from the local population. The lack of consideration given to local Muslims by the perpetrators of the attacks in Kenya and Tanzania suggests the willingness of jihadis to exploit African Muslims. Any terrorist could have predicted that there would be some fellow Muslims among the casualties, and there were. That the attacks went ahead suggests the perpetrators held the local Muslim population in low regard given the primacy of the wider, global goals. Alternatively, they may have expected that either: (1) since the vast majority of those killed would be non-Muslims, the attacks would create exploitable rifts between the local Christian and Muslim populations; or (2) a clumsy, heavy-handed response would further alienate Muslims, thus increasing the pool of local recruits. Our analysis suggests both, which bodes poorly for future efforts to deter jihadis from exploiting Kenya as an operational base on account of any such “sympathetic consideration” to their local co-religionists.

Painting Kenya as a stronghold for al-Qa’ida and other terrorist activity is an overstatement. In many ways, it remains East Africa’s leader in both political and economic terms. Yet it is Kenya’s very stature that makes it such a decisive battleground between al-Qa’ida and the West in the Horn of Africa as a whole. Its track record as a target for terrorists, combined with the underlying conditions of weak governance and religious-ideological influence on the coast, suggest that future terrorist attacks are likely. Efforts to defeat al-Qa’ida will require the U.S. and its allies to wade through a complicated set of actors and issues. Without the predictable operating environment offered by Kenya, it is unlikely that al-Qa’ida would have been able to mount effective operations in the Horn in the past. We therefore believe Kenya is the decisive point in the Horn of Africa.

⁹³ The policy concessions required to sustain Kenyan cooperation on counterterrorism issues also cut against other U.S. priorities such as promoting human rights and exempting military personnel from the International Criminal Court.

⁹⁴ This minimal level of concern reflects the fact that the targets have been largely foreign, though the vast majority of the victims are Kenyan, and that attacks have been infrequent enough so as not to damage the economy.

5. Conclusion: Key Issues and Policy Recommendations

I. Conclusions

Al-Qa'ida's efforts to establish a presence in the Horn of Africa and use it as a base for attacks against Western targets were largely a failure. Their only significant successes in the Horn were in Kenya, where the state's poor governance capacity combined with relative stability to create a favorable operational environment. In Somalia, unfavorable operating conditions prevented al-Qa'ida from achieving any of its significant objectives.

Al-Qa'ida failed in Somalia for three reasons. First, their arguments about fighting a foreign occupier did not resonate with locals because they too were seen as a foreign force. Second, they significantly underestimated the costs of operating in a failed state environment. Third, they could not recruit at a sufficient level to sustain operations because the benefits of membership were perceived as low in comparison to the costs of leaving one's clan or tribe.

The key strategic lesson from our analysis of al-Qa'ida's experiences in the Horn of Africa is that *the threat from terrorists operating in weak states is greater than from those operating in failed states*. This implies the need for a much greater focus on supporting counterterrorism in Kenya than has been the case so far. At the operational level, we conclude that effectively reducing terrorist threats requires carefully tailored policies that only rarely involve a direct foreign military intervention. In weak states like Kenya, direct military involvement may not be an option. Foreign military presence in weak states can actually discredit government counterterror efforts and risks creating incentives for the host government to tolerate low levels of terrorist activity. In failed states like Somalia, empowering local authorities and clans who can police their territory and compete with terrorist organizations for local support may yield even greater dividends in fighting terrorism. Maintaining and demonstrating the ability to judiciously strike emerging terrorist targets of opportunity also reduces these regions' value as safe havens.

Al-Qa'ida learned two distinct lessons in Somalia. First, they discovered that the youth were more attracted to the benefits of joining the jihad than others. Throughout the Harmony documents in this report, al-Qa'ida operatives discuss the zeal with which youth participated in jihadi operations and their relative susceptibility to propaganda and recruitment. However, the enthusiastic reactions of a few young men did not translate into wide-spread recruiting success for a variety of reasons discussed in Chapter 3. Second, al-Qa'ida, like other terrorist organizations such as Hamas and Hezbollah, learned that providing social services in the form of security and economic favors helped build a base of support for jihadi efforts. But competition to provide such services from clans and other local powers made it prohibitively expensive for al-Qa'ida to win widespread support through this strategy.¹

¹ Harmony, AFGP-2002-6000053, 5-6. See also Abu Bakr Naji, *The Management of Savagery*, trans. William McCants (West Point, N.Y.: Combating Terrorism Center, 2006). Al-Qa'ida strategists recognize the importance of providing social services in weakly governed areas in gaining legitimacy and popular

Conditions in the Horn of Africa may preclude the slow creep of al-Qa'ida and other associated movements without any overt actions on the part of the U.S. or other friendly governments. With the possible exception of Kenya, the Horn of Africa has been an inhospitable environment for jihadi organizations.² Multiple internal documents used in this study suggest that local conditions will likely thwart al-Qa'ida's efforts. In fact, open and well-publicized U.S. initiatives in the area could possibly enhance al-Qa'ida's efforts rather than weaken them. There are subtle initiatives that can make it more difficult for terrorists to operate in or from the Horn and magnify the challenges this environment poses. The next section provides specific recommendations on how the U.S. and other nations can enhance efforts to prevent terrorism in the Horn of Africa and elsewhere. Our final section identifies several key issues for the future.

II. Policy Recommendations

Our analysis of al-Qa'ida's experiences in this region, informed by primary source evidence from the Harmony database, leads to a number of regional and country-specific recommendations for the Horn. This section first identifies three general prescriptions for combating terrorism in the region and globally. We then detail a series of measures for combating terrorism in failed states and a separate set of measures for weak states.

A. General Policy Prescriptions Generated by al-Qa'ida's Experiences in the Horn of Africa

1. Prioritize counterterrorism efforts on weak states—not failed ones.

Failed states are difficult places for terrorists to operate. Security is problematic, local allies are unreliable, transportation and supplies are expensive and Western counterterrorism forces can operate freely.³ For a variety of reasons, weakly governed states often provide a more conducive environment for terrorists. Their sovereignty provides a measure of protection against strikes by Western forces. They often have a richer target set than failed states which have been abandoned by tourists and businesses. Their weak law enforcement capacity does little to increase operational risks to the terrorists.

2. Strike an effective balance between security and development.

Finding the proper balance between security and development continues to dog U.S. policy and programs in Iraq and Afghanistan. Most current nation-building efforts focus

support. However, the security risks such higher profile activities currently entail inhibit al-Qa'ida from aggressively pursuing them.

² Al-Qa'ida's failure to sustain its presence in Sudan is another example from the region. In this case, tactical overreach, exacerbated by inhospitable local conditions, led to al-Qa'ida's demise. Although Hasan al-Turabi's Islamist government invited bin Laden to Sudan in 1992, it turned on him as soon as his presence threatened the value of controlling the Sudanese state. Later, the regime kicked Ayman al-Zawahiri's Egyptian Islamic Jihad out of Sudan for posing a threat to their control of the state by usurping the prerogatives of the Sudanese intelligence services. Relatively strong states like Sudan may provide the best safe havens, but they often rapidly turn on organizations operating from their territory when such organizations become too strong or begin to bring unfavorable outside pressure.

³ Security concerns and logistical expenses are the main reasons that Abu Hafs suggested holding training courses in Khartoum after visiting newly developed camps in Somalia. Harmony, AFGP-2002-800597, 1.

on incremental military efforts to secure areas followed by slow, subsidized economic advancement. These efforts take large amounts of time, money and will. The reverse paradigm is also problematic. Resources devoted to economic improvement are quickly seized by criminal elements and rival factions in the absence of adequate security.

One way to strike the proper balance is to focus more on improving the capacity of local business interests to develop their own security infrastructure. The Somali case provides an example of how this can work. In late 2006, Somali clan leaders and businessmen in the Mogadishu area determined that a protracted guerrilla war against the advancing Ethiopian Army would be “bad for business.” In order to protect their economic interests, they prevented the Council of Islamic Courts (CIC) from reentering the capital in December 2006. While the CIC was accepted so long as it provided order, Somali business interests kept it out when it did not.⁴ Rather than focusing on building a security architecture that secures an unemployed, poor and restless populace ripe for radical recruitment, more pragmatic aid policies might support local actors with an economic interest in imposing favorable security conditions.

3. Sponsor efforts in weakly governed states that create the right incentives to effectively combat terrorist threats.

Successful counterterrorism policies in weakly governed states prone to corruption must address the challenge that governments in such states have strong reasons to prefer a low level of terrorist activity over no activity.⁵ Simply put, low levels of terrorism often bring significant security assistance from Western nations but do little to reduce economic activity or hurt the political prospects of incumbent leaders. External assistance conditioned solely on the presence of terrorism in effect rewards state failure to invest in the types of local activities needed to effectively address the problem.⁶ Overcoming these challenges requires creating incentives that promote effective, internally generated and sustainable counterterrorism measures tailored to unique local conditions. There are three steps to crafting the right policies.

⁴ Recent events are hard to interpret, but do not dramatically change our core assessment that Somali business interests prevented the CIC from returning to the capital. Two possibilities seem most likely with respect to current events: The first is that the recent violence in Mogadishu is being driven by clan leaders deeply dissatisfied with the Transitional Federal Government’s attempts to assert control over economic activity. The second is that the violence is driven by competition between the Hawiye clan and the Darood clan of interim President Abdullahi Yusuf. While there is simply insufficient evidence to fully understand the dynamics of this rapidly evolving situation, it does highlight the fact that a desire among Somali business and clan interests to end civil conflict does not necessarily mean they will support or tolerate a strong central state that could impinge on their prerogatives. For a good summary of conflicts that could be driving current violence see Harun Hassan and Cedric Barnes, “A Return to Clan-Politics (or Worse) in Southern Somalia?” Social Science Research Council, March 27, 2007.

⁵ Chapter 2 outlines this dynamic and Chapter 4 explores how it creates problems in Kenya.

⁶ A similar dynamic is seen in the history of the West’s efforts to address poverty and bring economic development to these same weak states. For example, African countries receiving the most economic aid in the 1960’s remain the poorest, most poverty stricken nations. Influxes of aid to corrupt central governments rarely translated into effective programs tailored to local conditions. See William Easterly, *The White Man’s Burden: Why the West’s Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good* (New York: Penguin, 2006).

First, use low-level engagement to determine why weak states tolerate terrorism. Leaders and institutions in weak states at both state and local levels have a variety of reasons to prefer low levels of terrorist activity rather than eradicate it completely, such as opportunities to use counterterrorism assistance funds to buy political allies and the ability to use support for Western counterterrorism policy priorities to ward off diplomatic pressure on issues like democratization and economic reform. Because no senior officials will admit having any tolerance for terrorism, high-level diplomatic contacts or military exchanges between senior officers will not provide an accurate picture. Active engagement at mid and lower institutional levels is necessary.

Second, promote activities that target the sources—not just the symptoms—of state incentives to tolerate terror. As the level of terrorism in weak states declines, the weight of economic and security assistance should shift to activities that help reduce corruption and improve the professionalism and competence of state internal security and law enforcement capacity.⁷ Third, condition counterterrorism assistance on demonstrated effort to combat terror.⁸ Conditioning aid on the level of the terrorist threat in a given target state creates perverse incentives to reduce terrorism only to the point where the gains from reducing terror are offset by the loss in aid that will follow from fully eradicating the threat. Conditioning aid on a reduction of terrorism also has drawbacks. States may avoid efforts to get tough on terror which “stir the hornets’ nest” and increase the level of terrorist activities in the short term. Assistance strategies that reward a state’s *effort* to combat terrorism avoid both problems.⁹

⁷ For example, Philippine Ramon Magsaysay, Philippine Defense Secretary and later President, is credited with turning the tide of the 1946-1954 Hukbalahap (Huk) Rebellion, an early incarnation of what is known now as the Communist Terrorist Movement in the Philippines. Magsaysay shifted from the more indiscriminate “Mailed Fist” policies favored early on by President Manuel A. Roxas, and instead focused on institutional reform within the Philippine constabulary and military to enhance effectiveness and reduce corruption that was challenging efforts to address the Huk rebels at local levels.

⁸ The Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) used to evaluate the effectiveness of U.S. security assistance disbursements is one example of the type of initiative needed to achieve this. Beginning in 2003, PART indicators were developed by region to measure the overall performance of recipients of military assistance. In Latin America, for example, the success of military assistance was measured using indicators that included: (1) number of terrorist attacks against the Cano Limon pipeline; (2) percentage of countries that volunteer for coalition operations when requested by the United States; and (3) percentage of U.S. security assistance recipients that have civilians in senior defense and leadership positions. U.S. Department of State report on Military Assistance accessed at

<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/28973.pdf>. Another way to credibly condition aid would be to ensure legislation funding counterterrorism assistance requires regular low-level evaluations of supported states’ counterterrorism efforts. For example, legislation funding the \$135 million Anti-Terrorism Assistance program could be written to prohibit providing aid to states that received a negative evaluation for effort in the previous fiscal year. The Bureau of Diplomatic Security, Office of Anti-Terrorism Assistance (DS/T/ATA) teams implementing the program in various countries would be responsible for the evaluation. For details on similar such restrictions see P.L. 87-195, Sections 571-574.

⁹ Emphasis on providing counter terrorism training is key to effective security assistance efforts. The appropriate mix of CT and other professional military and police training versus provision of weapons and equipment must be carefully assessed. Arming and equipping corrupt military and police forces is inherently risky and often leads to unintended and dangerous consequences.

B. Countering Terrorism in Failed States: The Case of Somalia

Countering terrorism in failed states presents a unique set of problems that are quite different from those in weak states. In many cases, preventing the rise of terrorism in failed states may require little action on the part of the U.S. and other Western nations. The case study in Chapter 3 demonstrates that the threat of terrorism from Somalia has yet to materialize as predicted. We believe the inherent challenges of operating in a failed state combine with specific local factors to make Somalia an unfavorable place for foreign terrorists to operate in or from. There are a number of policies that can ensure that Somalia remains an inhospitable place for jihadis. Some of these concepts may also be applicable to other failed states around the globe.

1. Prevent the creation of a Somali state based on jihadi ideology, accept one based on Islam.

Any functioning Somali state is likely to be highly religious. However, it need not be a threat. Indeed, even the CIC initially said it would not allow its territory to be used as a staging ground for international jihad. One way to ensure a favorable outcome may be to provide aid resources through clan leaders who may be intensely religious but who are too pragmatic to allow their territory to be used for transnational jihad. Doing so has the added benefit of reinforcing patrimonial behavior that, as our case study of Somalia shows, inhibits terrorist recruitment. This policy may be inefficient in terms of delivering aid to individual Somalis, but it is the most feasible alternative in the absence of any state method for distribution of aid and provisions.

Another method to reduce the chances of a jihadi state emerging in Somalia is to leverage the divisions between Somalis and foreign jihadis created by differences in Islamic ideology. The Somali version of Sufi Islam proved incompatible with the puritanical Salafi Islam preached by al-Qa'ida and its affiliates. One reason al-Qa'ida encountered such difficulties in Somalia is that the locals were largely uninterested in the ideology al-Qa'ida was promoting. Policy makers might look to support this bulwark against jihadi ideology by working through intermediaries to support appropriate Somali Sufi sects. Doing so would require a better understanding of subtle ideological differences than currently exists within the U.S. government. Limited intelligence and a dearth of experts on the ideological alignments of Somali clans make this task difficult to accomplish but it is nevertheless essential.

2. Selectively empower local authority structures in failed states.

Empowering local authorities in failed states can be problematic. Many such authorities are undemocratic, disrespect human rights, engage in irredentist politics and exploit local resources for illicit purposes.¹⁰ However, some local authorities also provide effective governance, greatly enhancing the welfare of the people living under their control and stability in the area. Whatever the merits of their rule, local authorities often have strong reasons to oppose those who would upset local conditions by doing things like using

¹⁰ E.g., the Afghan drug trade, the trade in diamonds that funded local militias during the civil war in Sierra Leone, or the tacit support Kurdish rebels fighting in Turkey received during the mid-1990s from the leaders of what is now Iraqi Kurdistan.

their territory to attack Western targets.¹¹ Groups like al-Qa'ida pose a competitive threat to local leaders' ability to tax the population, bring the threat of increased external attention and, as the Somali experience shows, risk being labeled as unwelcome foreign occupiers. Local authorities can be so effective at inhibiting foreign terrorists that in February 1993 one al-Qa'ida operative writes that in the Somali jihad, "The second period will be all against tribe leaders..."¹² Al-Qa'ida's recruitment efforts continue to target youth in failed states. The most effective way to fight these efforts is to minimize the benefits of membership in al-Qa'ida and raise the benefits of remaining loyal to their clan leaders or other local authorities.

Development in poor areas might reinforce loyalty to clan and local leaders. However, it is not clear that Western nations know how to foster state-centric economic development in failed states. A more pragmatic approach might be to reinforce the kinds of clan and tribe loyalties that prevented al-Qa'ida from making significant recruiting inroads in Somalia. Economic aid, and potentially security assistance, should be directed to those clans that: (1) maintain an ideology counter to Salafi-jihadi doctrine; (2) provide effective and non-oppressive governance over their people; and (3) have the ability to provide a security buffer against terrorist interests. The U.S. and its allies should avoid overtly employing military forces to implement any such development strategy. Instead, they should work with NGOs and other development institutions that are better suited for providing aid, understand local power structures and have regional and country experts on hand to monitor program effectiveness. From a counterterrorism perspective, empowering local leaders, especially when it comes at the expense of an ineffectual central government, may actually reduce terrorists' operational freedom.

Respect for state sovereignty and international law will prevent the U.S. from supporting separatist or irredentist claims. Short of endorsing their political agenda, however, the U.S. should support local leaders who exhibit greater potential to provide good governance than the central state. Doing so may yield more effective policing of a given territory and deny terrorists safe haven. In Somalia, such a policy would mean supporting locally generated government in the absence of governance from the center. For example, there are counterterrorism benefits to be gained by working through the United Nations to establish Somaliland and Puntland as effectively governed autonomous regions and providing targeted international aid and assistance to these areas. In addition to supporting the relatively responsible leaders who have made things better for their populations, such a strategy can help isolate and contain the more dangerous potential safe haven of southern Somalia.

3. Publicize the elitist nature of al-Qa'ida's fighters and their disrespect for Somalis.

It is clear that on several occasions al-Qa'ida's Arab operatives thought themselves superior to the native Africans they encountered. We see this in the cavalier attitude taken towards Kenyan and Tanzanian Muslims in the 1998 Embassy bombings. Working to

¹¹ Indeed, in 1997 the Taliban leadership allegedly invited Osama bin Laden to move from Jalalabad to Kandahar so that they could more effectively monitor his activities. Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 226, 245, 247.

¹² Harmony, AFGP-2002-800600, 2.

publicize the derisive attitude many al-Qa'ida operatives have towards the locals may reduce the ability of foreign jihadis to operate in African countries. Any U.S. efforts to directly promote this discussion through Western media outlets will likely be seen as propaganda. However, facilitating the discussion of this issue through academic and political forums in Africa and the Middle East may be possible. There are many journalistic and academic accounts of al-Qa'ida's disdain for segments of the African population. Bringing these discussions forward through the funding of debates and research initiatives may assist in shedding more light on this cleavage.

4. Work through surrogates whenever possible to provide interdiction and maintain the capability to conduct covert and/or clandestine surgical strikes against high value targets.

Whenever possible, the U.S. and its allies should rely on countries within the region to deal with terrorism within their own borders. Any large scale U.S. military action is likely to create more terrorists than it eliminates and will serve to confirm al-Qa'ida's claims that the U.S. has imperialistic ambitions in the region, claims which appear to be viewed with skepticism by many Africans. Moreover, regional military interventions that cross state borders may fare no better. Recent violence against Ethiopian troops in Somalia suggests that any foreign force, be it American, African or jihadi, will meet strong local resistance in Somalia. Engaging at the lowest possible level, often with sub-state actors, may be the most effective approach to putting military pressure on terrorists operating in failed states. However, as recent actions in Somalia demonstrate, a capacity for U.S. or U.S.-sponsored overt, covert and/or clandestine surgical strikes raises the risks for al-Qa'ida and associated movements to operate in Somalia.

5. Implement strategies of graduated containment around failed states.

Somalia demonstrates that al-Qa'ida is likely to flounder in areas where: (1) it is difficult and costly for any organization to operate; (2) Salafi ideology clashes with local strains of Islam; and (3) clan and familial powers are likely to resist the expansion of al-Qa'ida's influence. When al-Qa'ida ventures into such regions, efficient strategies to degrade al-Qa'ida's effectiveness may entail refraining from hunting al-Qa'ida directly and instead seeking to *contain and monitor* it in those areas.

In the Horn, such a strategy of graduated containment would create a ring of security around the failed state of southern Somalia such that al-Qa'ida may be able to enter the region but will not be able to project any power from it nor sustain long-term operations. The outer ring would involve continued diplomatic engagement and civil society capacity-building in Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Kenya. The next ring would include enhanced border controls, law enforcement efforts and economic development in the Ogaden region of Ethiopia and on the coast of Kenya. The final ring would include supporting autonomy for Somaliland and Puntland. These two states-within-a-state treat their people well by regional standards and can be used as buffer zones against the failed state of southern Somalia. By granting them a measure of recognition, it becomes easier to support economic development as well as their efforts to secure their borders, thereby narrowing al-Qa'ida's operational space.

C. Countering Terrorism in Weak States: The Case of Kenya

Weak states pose a unique policy dilemma for Western counterterrorism efforts. Because they are sovereign the U.S. and other nations cannot directly intervene. Instead, the U.S. and others must rely on weak states' efforts to serve a global end. However, these states lack sufficient capacity to fully interdict terrorists' efforts. Additionally, weak states provide a plethora of Western targets which, combined with a permissive operating environment, presents terrorists with a distinct advantage over U.S. counterterrorism forces. Dealing with weak states in the Horn and globally will require a delicate assessment of each country's dynamics, capacity and motivation.

1. Focus efforts on coastal Kenya as a key battle ground against al-Qa'ida.

The Kenyan coast provides the best opportunity in the Horn for al-Qa'ida and its associated movements to operate and project force. Not as anarchic as Somalia, coastal Kenya provides a permissive environment for jihadis. Terrorists operating there are shielded from U.S. military action by Kenyan sovereignty and find a sympathetic population from which to draw support. While casting Kenya as a terrorist stronghold would be an overstatement, the internal divisions between Kenya's coastal population and Kenya's central government do provide a mobilizing issue for Islamist terrorism. Elements of the disaffected population of Mombasa, a recurring location for terrorists seeking safe haven, may tolerate the presence of al-Qa'ida and AIAI operatives. At the very least, they will be slow to report suspicious activity to the central government, which Muslims believe to be corrupt and repressive.

2. Use targeted aid to raise al-Qa'ida's operating costs in at-risk areas in weak states.

Pursuing development and foreign aid that helps rural disaffected populations in coastal Kenya will not only earn good will and legitimacy for the central government, but will also increase the price terrorists need to pay to buy local assistance and acquiescence. Removing local tolerance of al-Qa'ida activities and preventing the emergence of safe havens requires persistent development and law enforcement efforts.

Current efforts by the U.S. military are popular among local Muslims but are seen as too small in scale and clearly tied to counterterrorism and not economic development. The U.S. should increase economic development and government capacity beginning in Lamu and working back along the coast towards Mombasa. A sustained commitment to improving the economic status of coastal Kenyans is likely to produce three benefits. First, it will increase intelligence on terrorist activities. Second, it will decrease the political costs Kenyan politicians pay for supporting U.S. counterterrorism priorities, and so increase their level of cooperation. Third, increased economic aid raises the cost to terrorists of providing social services as a buy-in mechanism for their larger goals.

One area of common interest which would indirectly support counterterrorism efforts is counter-narcotics operations. Kenyan Muslim leaders have grown increasingly concerned with the influx of illicit drugs along the coast.¹³ By working with coastal Muslims to counter narcotics, the U.S. would: (1) illustrate that it respects the values of

¹³ Author interview, Nairobi, March 9, 2007.

the Muslim religion; (2) assist Kenya in reducing criminal activity; (3) improve border control thus minimizing the ability of terrorists to move through Kenya; and (4) improve the reputation of Kenyan law enforcement. The U.S. could provide police and customs advisors to the Kenyan Coastal Police for improving law enforcement and interdiction capacity as well as transparency.

3. Promote greater pluralism and participation in the political process by engaging Muslim political parties and candidates through NGOs and IGOs.

Kenya boasts a lively democratic political process. Although a minority, Muslims actively seek government office along Kenya's coast. An effort that might truly undermine terrorist ideology is the support of Muslims seeking elected office.¹⁴ U.S. support should be directed to NGOs that assist Muslim political organizations, which have often been unrepresented in Kenyan government and discouraged by their lack of access to the democratic process. Doing this will make support for U.S. counterterrorism priorities among Kenyan politicians more viable. These activities should aim to: (1) garner support for Muslim politicians who reject the Salafi ideology of al-Qa'ida and like-minded terrorist groups; and (2) elevate the capacity, education and rights of coastal Muslims, who have had limited opportunity to date, thereby making them less likely to tolerate a jihadi presence.

4. Identify and subsidize institutional reforms that will reap indirect rewards in counterterrorism.

The greatest threats to the security of Kenyan citizens are disease and crime. Helping the Kenyan government address these top concerns, especially on the coast, will make Kenyans more likely to report suspicious activities and might encourage them to more aggressively oppose terrorist influences. Improving health care and criminal justice may thus do more to combat terrorism than policies that specifically seek to enhance "counterterrorism" or "antiterrorism" capacities. Two policy efforts that would meet this goal are: (1) conditioning security assistance on criminal justice reforms such as increased professionalism among police officers and prosecutors; and (2) focusing aid on the health care system.

5. Condition security assistance on Kenyan effort to combat terrorism.

The massive amounts of counterterrorism-related funding provided by the U.S. means Kenyan officials may actually gain from having a continuing terrorist threat in their state. There are two ways to ease this problem. First, security assistance can be refocused to areas which offer fewer opportunities for patronage than direct payments for military hardware, such as increased police training, governance training and anti-corruption efforts. Second, policy-makers can take advantage of low- and mid-level contacts with the Kenyan security service to evaluate how counterterrorism funding is actually being used by the Kenyan government. If it turns out that Kenyan government institutions are less than fully devoted to counterterrorism or are using security assistance funds for

¹⁴ In Lamu district, there is currently at least one female Muslim candidate running for office and she appears to be both well respected and receiving some base of support.

patronage purposes, future security assistance should be explicitly linked to improved effort.

III. Future Prospects for Terrorism in the Horn of Africa

Outside of Kenya, the prospects for a serious terrorist threat to emerge in the Horn of Africa seem quite low. The region has consistently proven much less hospitable to foreign jihadis than conventional wisdom has suggested. Engaging with sub-national authorities in failed states like Somalia will ensure this remains the case. A strategy of graduated containment can effectively minimize the threat when such engagement fails. Inside Kenya, institutional reforms in the law enforcement sector and economic development on the coast are the key to preventing the emergence of terrorist safe havens. Direct military assistance will have limited impact given the political constraints on the Kenyan government. Moreover, substantial military assistance conditioned on the threat of terrorism creates counter-productive incentives to tolerate low levels of jihadi activity because fully eradicating the threat means losing the security assistance. Instead, counterterrorism efforts should focus on reducing the factors—weak police capacity and disgruntled citizens willing to tolerate the presence of foreign militants—that make Kenya, or any weak state for that matter, a valuable operational haven for terrorists.

Elsewhere in the Horn of Africa, the potential for terrorism directed at Western targets seems low. There are few lucrative targets and local insurgent organizations have few incentives to attack Western targets. They also have few incentives to ally themselves to the global jihadi movement. Doing so would bring a dramatic increase in security pressure without a concomitant increase in resources or recruits. However, given the region's history as a venue for terrorist attacks, continued vigilance is required. The policy recommendations outlined in this report provide guidance for how best to pursue this goal. By focusing efforts on weak states, working through local allies at the lowest possible level and supporting institutional reforms that eliminate incentives to tolerate low levels of terrorism, policy makers can efficiently ensure that a greater threat does not develop in this important region.

Appendices to Part I

A. Case Studies of Regional Terrorist Groups

B. Cast of Characters from the Horn of Africa

C. Notes and Interviews from Kenya

APPENDIX A

CASE STUDIES OF REGIONAL TERRORIST GROUPS

- I. Al-Ittihad al-Islami (AIAI)**
- II. Eritrean Islamic Jihad Movement (EJIM)**

I. Somalia's al-Ittihad al-Islami (AIAI; Islamic Union)

The Rise of al-Ittihad al-Islami

Al-Ittihad al-Islami (The Islamic Union) is one of the most widely discussed Islamist groups from the Horn of Africa, yet its ties to the global jihadi movement remain obscure. The lack of clarity stems from the fluidity of organizational alliances in Somalia; it is often difficult to confirm formal ties between jihadi groups, and this is particularly true in the Somali landscape. Despite that fact, AIAI it is known to have had ties at the highest levels of leadership to global jihadi groups, including al-Qa'ida.

Now essentially defunct, the group rose to prominence in the 1980s and its influence peaked in 1992; yet its leadership remains active in Somalia and does present a threat for further al-Qa'ida influence in the country. Al-Ittihad was established in the early 1980s through the merger of Salafi groups that enjoyed popularity in Somalia in the 1960s and 1970s, largely as a result of their attempts to regain lost Somali land after independence and resistance to dictator Siad Barre and Western influence. As such, they gained the support of the Somali people through nationalist causes more than through a common affinity for Salafism; indeed the ideology was widely unpopular in the country in previous years.

Salafi ideology was first introduced to Somalia in the 1940s by scholars trained in Saudi Arabia. Somali Muslims were predominately Shafi'i Sunnis and there was a long-standing tradition of Sufism in the Horn of Africa, making it initially a difficult grounds for the ideology to spread. Local scholars issued fatwas banning Salafi ideology from being propagated. With independence in 1960, however, political tendencies had changed. The Somali government looked to the West for technical assistance in modernizing as Islamic revivalist movements influenced by Salafism, namely the Muslim Brotherhood, called for resistance to Western influence, coinciding with traditional scholars' frustration with Western involvement in the country.

The oil boom of the 1970s and 80s brought Somali workers to the Gulf, the majority of them to Saudi Arabia. Reportedly thousands of Somalis were also offered scholarships during these years to study at Saudi institutions, and most ended up at the three most prominent Salafi educational institutions—the Islamic University of Medina, Umm al-Qura` in Mecca and Imam Muhammad bin Saud University in Riyadh. This development, along with the changing internal dynamics in Somalia, transformed the country from one hostile to Salafi thought into one receptive to its order, militancy, and vision for a rigid implementation of Islamic law.

Some of the nascent Salafi centers, in the suburbs of Mogadishu and in northern Somalia in particular, began to gain a steady following of worshippers, coming to daily prayers but also seeking instruction on *tafsir* (Qur'anic exegesis), and regular lectures on a variety of religious, social and political issues. Like most other Salafi movements, these were focused on doctrinal matters and attempting to instill an understanding of the *shari'a* in its followers, creating a loyal segment of Somali society dedicated to the

eventual implementation of Islamic law in Somalia. Chief among these organizations was al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya.

It is common among militant Salafi groups for the leadership to have studied at Salafi institutions in Saudi Arabia while rejecting the legitimacy of the Saudi royal family. Somali Islamist groups have been no exception. Leaders such as Shaykh `Ali Warsame were training in Saudi Salafi institutions while working with social-activist minded Islamists akin to the Muslim Brotherhood movement. His group, Wahdat al-Shabab al-Islamiyya (Unity of Islamic Youth), partnered with al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya and, at the same time between 1982-84, the leadership of these two organizations merged and renamed itself al-Ittihad al-Islami. Warsame became a key leader in the new organization, and the leadership from the parent organizations largely remained unique.

The Global Jihadi Presence in Somalia

The early 1990s brought further chaos and violence to the country, especially northern Somalia and Mogadishu, with the fall of the Siad Barre regime. Al-Ittihad had been openly denouncing the Barre regime, and amid the onset of civil war and growing lawlessness, the organization was transformed from one spreading the message of Salafi Islam to one engaged in armed conflict. Another key development that occurred during this time was the emergence of Dahir Hasan Aweys as the leader of the military wing of al-Ittihad, waging battles against rival clans and warlords fighting for control of the country. He was one of the group's leaders to establish ties with other militant Islamist groups, including al-Qa'ida members based in Sudan. Al-Ittihad enlisted thousands of fighters during the early 1990s.

Following a conference in 1991 (during which time al-Ittihad was attempting to exercise control in the power vacuum of Somali politics), `Ali Warsame was serving as a head of the group with Aweys as the leader of the military wing. From this point forward, al-Ittihad began receiving substantial funding from wealthy Saudi individuals and ostensibly charitable organizations like the Muslim World League and the International Islamic Relief Organization—two organizations known to be financial supporters of al-Qa'ida.

Al-Ittihad militants attacked foreign aid workers in Somalia and continued to launch attacks against rival factions. They took over and maintained control of some areas of Somalia and implemented strict versions of Islamic law there. Members of the group traveled freely throughout the Horn and established an extensive network in Kenya.

While al-Ittihad was attempting to establish an Islamic state in Somalia, al-Qa'ida was sending funding, arms and fighters to support the Islamists, and shared the same goal—the creation of an Islamic state in Somalia—although their support was not solely directed toward the al-Ittihad organization. Bin Laden acknowledged in two interviews that he supplied arms and training to the mujahidin who killed 18 American soldiers during Operation Restore Hope in October, 1993. Reports published by CNN and others

indicate that bin Laden provided these materials to the fighters under the warlord Muhammad Farah Aideed, who had affiliated himself with al-Ittihad. (Aideed plotted the coup against Siad Barre, and also switched his loyalties among various Islamist and tribal groups in Somalia during the early 1990s.) Such links were typical of al-Qa'ida's involvement in Somalia, given the fluidity of leadership and organizational structure among the militant groups.

Beginning in 1992, Muhammad Atef (aka Abu Hafs al-Masri) made multiple trips to Somalia from al-Qa'ida's base in Khartoum and met with militant leaders, accessed capabilities and made connections to provide training and arms to fighters there. The aim of these visits, according to the indictment against him by the U.S. Department of Justice, was to support local forces in attacking U.S. and UN forces in Somalia. It also coincided with a fatwa from bin Laden in 1993 calling for attacks on Western interests in Somalia. This culminated in the deaths of 18 U.S. military personnel on October 3-4, 1993, when three helicopters were downed by al-Qa'ida trained Somali militants.

Some analysts believe bin Laden devoted up to \$3 million towards the establishment of an Islamic state administered by al-Ittihad al-Islami. The purpose of this investment can be understood in terms of bin Laden's and his senior aides' desire to find alternate bases for their operations. Despite denials from bin Laden and Somali militants at various times of al-Qa'ida involvement in these battles, it is hard to deny the group's participation at some level in Somali militancy during this time, or the fact that bin Laden and others eyed Somalia as a potential safe haven for their organization.

In the following years, al-Ittihad was greatly weakened and began dissolving. One of the group's long-term aims was to reclaim Ogaden, the Somali-inhabited land in eastern Ethiopia, yet the group seems to have underestimated the resolve of the Ethiopian military, which determined to eradicate al-Ittihad in 1996. Although some members participated in the Islamic Courts Union that came to power a decade later, this was more a matter of leadership regrouping than a continuation of the al-Ittihad organization. According to one analyst:

“Al-Ittihad al-Islami is now largely defunct. It never recovered completely from Ethiopia's cross-border rout of the organization in 1996. While some members of AIAI joined the Islamic courts, most notably Aweys, the courts movement was distinct from AIAI and should not be considered a reincarnated version of it.”¹

Despite questions about the level of al-Qa'ida's involvement in Somalia since the early 1990s, the statements by the group's senior leaders and strategists make clear the importance placed on Somalia for the global jihad movement. Additionally, during the late 1990s, mid-level operatives such as Harun Fazul and Wadih al-Hage were active in the Horn of Africa, in Nairobi and Mogadishu, while plotting the U.S. Embassy

¹ Marquardt, "Al-Qaeda's Threat to Ethiopia."

bombings in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi. Indeed, the lack of attacks on Western interests in Somalia is probably due to the fact that very few of them exist there, and the impact of actions are felt far greater on targets in other countries.

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II. The Eritrean Islamic Jihad Movement (EJIM)

Eritrean separatism began in earnest during World War II, as Eritrea passed from Italian to British rule in 1941 and remained under British administration until 1950. The initial constitution in 1952 was ratified by Emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie, but Eritrea and Ethiopia were linked through a federal system, under the sovereignty of the emperor. Eritreans resisted Ethiopian rule and began armed struggle for their independence in 1958.

The Eritrean Islamic Jihad Movement (EIJM) began activity in 1975 when a group of Islamist-minded guerrillas split off from the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) that had been fighting since the beginning of the Eritrean independence movement. The EIJM was formally established in 1980. Since independence in 1993, the EIJM (and its factions) have been the principal Muslim opposition group in Eritrea, seeking the violent overthrow of the ELF government led by President Isaias Afewerki. EIJM claims to only target the Eritrean government and its apparatus in the country, not Western targets, and seeks the establishment of an Islamic caliphate in Eritrea.

The group is based in Sudan and is made up primarily of dissidents from the ELF, conservative Eritreans (and some other Muslims from Horn of Africa countries), and a Muslim youth network. The group is also known by a variety of other names—the Eritrean Islamic Reform Movement, the Abu Suhail organization, the Eritrean Islamic Salvation Movement, and the Eritrean Islamic Party for Justice and Development—but many of these appear to be break-away groups that operate with some degree of autonomy.

This is reflective of the climate for political and militant Islamic organizations in the Horn of Africa. Like other neighboring countries during the last three decades, Eritrea saw a number of Salafi organization rise to popularity, where before the mid-1950s the ideology had been largely alien to this region. In the 1980s, the Jabhat Tahrir al-Iritriyya al-Islamiyya al-Wataniyya (The National Eritrean Islamic Liberation Front), the Munzzamat al-Ruwwad al-Muslimin al-Iritria (The Organization of Eritrean Pioneer Muslims), al-Intifada al-Islamiyya (Islamic Awakening) and others were founded, some in Sudan. By 1988, these organizations merged to form the EIJM.

This union of militant Islamists, however, continued to fragment. Within five years, a militant Salafi faction emerged under Shaykh Abu Suhail (also known as Muhammad Ahmad), who participated in the Afghan jihad against the Soviets. He is mentioned as the leader of the Eritrean Jihad movement in documents captured from al-Qa'ida in Afghanistan². It is from this connection that some allege EIJM has ties to al-Qa'ida; its operations in Khartoum may also have put members in contact with al-Qa'ida,

² See "Harmony and Disharmony: Exploiting Al-Qa'ida's Organizational Vulnerabilities", Harmony, AFGP-2002-801138.

which was also based in Sudan during the early- to mid-1990s. A more moderate faction calling for dialogue and reconciliation also emerged within the EIJM opposed to Abu Suhail.

Currently led by Khalil Mohammed Amer, the EIJM today falls under the umbrella of opposition group known as the Eritrean National Alliance. This can be a near dizzying array of organizations and factions in the Eritrean Islamic scene, but over the past decade, they have carried out relatively few successful operations. In 2003 EIJM claimed responsibility for a hotel bombing and an ambush killing 46 Eritrean military personnel. The group was initially blamed for the 2003 killing of British geologist Timothy Nutt, but EIJM denied the claims and reaffirmed its goals only to target the Eritrean government. In March 2006, a reincarnation of the EIJM, renamed the Harakat al-Islah al-Islamiyya al-Iritri, issued a statement claiming responsibility for five attacks over a one month period on Eritrean forces which resulted in the death of five soldiers.

With its base in Khartoum, the EIJM runs most of its operations in western Eritrea near the Sudanese border. Ethiopia temporarily allied with Sudan in the 1988 war between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and Kalashnikovs and RPGs originating in Sudan have been found on EIJM rebels. Sudanese support has not been unconditional or long-term, however. While Hasan al-Turabi ruled most of Sudan in the early 1990s, he cracked down on some of the EIJM members and closed some of its offices and operations. Sudan hosts tens of thousands of Eritrean refugees, and as with other refugee diasporas, there was likely fear that they could influence Sudanese politics.

The main EIJM body led by Khalil Muhammad Amer, as described by its deputy Abu al-Bara' Hasan Salman in a 1998 interview with the now-defunct Islamist magazine *al-Nida'*, aims to carry out: "Armed struggle and training youth; da'wa [outreach] and education... [W]e accompany the Qur'an and Sunnah and aim to fulfill as a group all the aims therein and to realize our position as servants of Allah, and to establish the Islamic State." He states, "The Islamic Jihad Movement is striving against two groups, the Christian regime and the hypocrites. The movement also represents the only military option which had proved its fortitude in confronting the Christian regime in Eritrea."

Salman went on to say, regarding the "external front," which is "very sensitive ... from the aspect of our strategic security," that they aim to "exchange our experience and expertise with other Muslim organizations which also work to challenge the various corrupt regimes in the region... Strive to generate the suitable opportunities to support our Jihad through Islamic means; and [m]ove around neighbouring countries and expose the corruption of the Eritrean regime and its danger over the entire region on the religious, security, and political fronts."

As is clear from this description, the group has aspirations for uniting with like-minded Islamist groups (the majority of them militant Salafi) and moving toward the establishment of an Islamic state. There is thus a legitimate concern that the EIJM would seek to cooperation with al-Qa'ida, though the former remains ostensibly dedicated to only attacking Eritrean targets.

The Eritrean jihad movements are highly active online, promoting their message, providing extensive news coverage of developments and information condemning the Eritrean regime in three languages. Websites connected to or maintained by Eritrean Islamic Jihad include: (the now defunct) www.eijm.org, www.alkhalas.org (the Eritrean Islamic Salvation Movement, renamed the Eritrean Islamic Party for Justice and Development), www.islaher.org (the Eritrean Islamic Reform Movement), and the more moderate news portal awate.com.

Given the high degree of fragmentation, illustrated by the proliferation of factions and continual renaming of the organization, the movement remains ineffective, but not inactive. There is a shared set of ideology and goals between al-Qa'ida and the Eritrean Jihad movement, but given the absence of high-impact Western targets and the disharmony among Eritrean Islamist, it is unlikely al-Qa'ida or the wider global jihad movement would become seriously involved in Eritrea.

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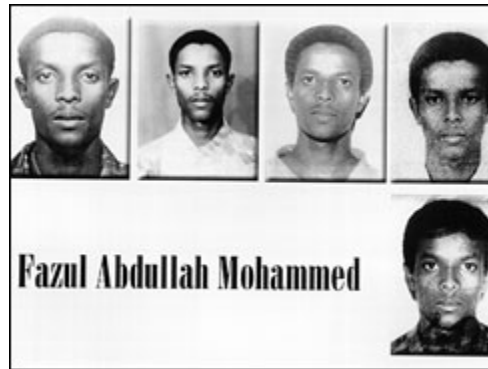
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APPENDIX B

CAST OF CHARACTERS FROM THE HORN OF AFRICA

- I. Abdullah Muhammad Fazul**
- II. Abu Hafs al-Masri**
- III. Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys**
- IV. Saif al-Adel**
- V. Lesser Members/Affiliates of Al-Qa'ida**
 - a. Aden Hashi Fara Ayro**
 - b. Gouled Hasan Dourad**
 - c. Abu Talha al-Sudani**

I. Abdullah Muhammad Fazul



Childhood and Adolescence¹

Abdullah Muhammad Fazul Husseine Mullah Ati² (Arabic: عبد الله محمد فاضل حسين ملا اتي) was born in the district of Magoudjou³ in the town of Moroni, the capital city of Grande Comore, the largest of the four⁴ Comoros Islands, a tiny former French colony off the northeastern coast of Mozambique. Though he has used February 25, 1974 and December 25, 1974 as dates of birth on various documents, it is likely that his true date of birth is August 25, 1972, a date also used in some documents.⁵ He was the youngest of six children, and his parents separated during his infancy over his father's decision to take a second wife. Not long after in 1975, the Comoros declared its independence from France, and it has been politically and economically unstable ever since. There have been no fewer than nineteen coups or attempted coups on the islands since independence, and lacking any natural resources or industries, the tiny nation is extremely poor.⁶ There are no post-secondary educational institutions on the islands, and all who would seek higher learning must do so overseas.

¹ The following sketch of Fazul's early life is based on information derived from these sources: Hirschhorn, "Elusive Al Qaeda Operative"; McNeil, "Assesses of a Bombing Suspect"; "On the Trail of Man Wanted for Bomb Blast"; Vick, "FBI Trails Embassy Bombing Suspect"; "What Turns a Boy into a Terrorist?"

² Name at birth from wanted poster here: <http://www.rewardsforjustice.net/english/index.cfm?page=Fazul>. In the autobiographical document described in "On the Trail of Man Wanted for Bomb Blast," Fazul gives his name at the beginning of the document as follows: "Abdullah Muhammad, a.k.a. 'Ali Fadil Husayn Mulla Ati, a.k.a. Harun Fazul."

³ "On the Trail of Man Wanted for Bomb Blast." *The Nation* (Nairobi), May 13, 2006.

⁴ In addition to the three islands under its current jurisdiction, the Comoran government lays claim to the island of Mayotte, though the latter is currently a French overseas territory.

⁵ Hirschhorn, "Elusive." His current age is almost invariably cited in media reports in accordance with the '72 birthdate – e.g., recent reporting (early 2007) on Fazul gives his age as being 34. When referring to his early life, however, different writers give different ages for significant events – thus, different sources give his age when first travelling to Pakistan as somewhere between 14 and 18, with a plurality of sources citing 16. This variance is probably due to the different dates of birth used by Fazul in various documents.

⁶ "Comoros," *C.I.A. World Factbook*, < <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/cn.html> > Accessed 20 February 2007.

In relative terms, Fazul's family appear to have been among the small middle class of Moroni. One of Fazul's sisters owned a clothing shop on Magoudjou Street in Moroni and his uncle Sagaff Abdullah had a mattress shop on the same street, opposite the largest hospital in the Comoros. Fazul's father was a well-known and respected preacher in the islands. Several of the members of Fazul's father's family moved to Pakistan in the 1970s; such a move would have been far beyond the means of most of the islands' inhabitants. The Moroni home of Fazul's late mother (d. 1997), where Fazul lived during his childhood, is described as "a sizable masonry home in a neighborhood where other houses are made of galvanized tin or palm leaves."⁷ In a home video taken when Fazul was fifteen years old, one can see that he and the other people in the video are well-dressed-Harun wears slacks and a button-up shirt-and that the home is well-appointed; women and men are visible mingling together at the gathering, and none of the women wear any kind of head covering.⁸ This provides some indication that the maternal branch of Fazul's immediate family was Islamically liberal, which is true of the majority of Comoran Muslims.⁹

Fazul had close and enduring relationships with his family, with the exception of his father; interviewed at his apartment in central Moroni in 1998, his father claimed to have rarely seen his son since childhood.¹⁰ Throughout his adult life, Fazul made frequent trips home to visit with his mother's family as well as that of his father-in-law, who is Fazul's paternal uncle. Fazul wrote letters to his family as well, and in at least one letter to his brother Omar, who is five years older, he frankly discussed his turn to Islamist terrorism. In 1996, Fazul paid for his mother to be flown to Paris for cancer treatment; on the very day of the embassy bombings, 7 August 1998, Fazul arranged for his father-in-law to be flown from a hospital in Nairobi back to Moroni.¹¹ Despite the fact that he has constantly been on the move since joining al-Qa'ida, Fazul has managed to keep his wife and children with him for much of the time.

As a child and young teen, Fazul appears by all accounts to have been precocious but otherwise normal. He played soccer and the flute, enjoyed dancing to popular music-several people remembered him dancing like Michael Jackson-and liked to show off his prowess at twirling around kung fu fighting sticks. When playing with others he

⁷ Vick, "FBI Trails."

⁸ "What Turns a Boy Into a Terrorist?"

⁹ The Comoros Islands are 98% Sunni Muslim, though it is common to see women in public there without any head coverings. Qat and alcohol are available in shops, and Islamist parties have consistently done miserably at the polls in the elections that have punctuated the many Comoran coups. Local people interviewed about Fazul generally view him as a villain, and the traditional Muslim leadership there has expressed alarm and disapproval at the Saudi-funded incursion of Wahhabism there. The islands' grand mufti stated in 1998, referring to Hasan al-Turabi's National Islamic Front, which had offered "scholarships" to Comorans for study at madararas abroad since the mid-1980s, "We are openly against this organization. They are looking for people who are not well in the mind, who are poor, who need new visions" (Vick, "FBI Trails Embassy Bombing Suspect").

¹⁰ Vick, "FBI Trails Embassy Bombing Suspect."

¹¹ Fazul's father-in-law died soon thereafter; already in the late stages of a terminal illness, he died of injuries sustained when Comoran police tipped him out of his bed during a search following the embassy bombings.

sometimes pretended to be James Bond. In other words, he was exposed to and enjoyed the kind of Western cultural productions that are anathema to Salafis.

Fazul received a traditional Islamic education in his early years. At the age of four he began basic Qur'an studies with an uncle and at seven began attending the madrasa of Fundi¹² Twawilou Abdulfateh. By age 9 he had memorized much of the Qur'an and began in this year to appear on Radio Comoros, reading instructions on prayer and other Islamic matters prepared by his Qur'an teacher. At 13, he began to read instructions and advice on the radio that he prepared himself. By this point, Fazul had learned Swahili, Comorian (related to Swahili), French and Arabic, and had had a good deal of exposure to English as well. As an adult he would become fluent in all of these tongues.

His first madrasa teacher, Fundi Twawilou, remembers Fazul fondly, recalling that he was exceptionally bright; Fazul was two levels ahead of one of his sisters, though she was the elder by several years. But Fundi Twawilou also saw the beginnings of Fazul's propensity for violence. He recalls that Fazul often had bouts of rage; he would pick fights with older boys on the soccer field, and sometimes administered his own corporal punishment to classmates for mistakes in reciting the Qur'an, slamming them down in their chairs. At the local French-language public school, Fazul was expelled for striking his French teacher. At age 11, he cut the ear of one of Fundi Twawilou's charges for making a mistake in Qur'an recitation and the teacher asked Fazul to leave the school.¹³

At this point, Fazul began attending the classes of an older teacher, Fundi Muhammad Ali, who remembers Fazul as "brilliant, respectful to others, deeply religious and very calm."¹⁴ Friends who knew him in these years generally corroborate this view. One former schoolmate recalls that Fazul was "a bit reserved. In fact, a recluse of sorts. Only arguments on matters of religion seemed to interest him. Then he could argue with heated passion."¹⁵ Another former classmate and congregant at the same mosque that Fazul frequented remembers his unusual intelligence and breadth of knowledge – he said that Fazul "knew more than the average Comoran boy," and that he "was always quoting this or that philosopher or 'religious leader'" – but also "his bitterness about the tumultuous politics of the islands." Saying that Fazul was an "unhappy young man who was always complaining," this person remembers Fazul as being a fierce critic of the French and of the founding president of the independent Comoros, Ahmed Abdullah.¹⁶

¹² "Fundi" is Swahili for a skilled person, expert, or teacher, in this instance roughly equivalent to the Arabic "sheikh."

¹³ McNeil, "Assesses of a Bombing Suspect." Elsewhere in the same article McNeil describes this event in slightly different terms; he calls Fazul a "brilliant student of the Koran who was thrown out of religious school for caning a lazy pupil hard enough to draw blood."

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ "On the Trail of Man Wanted for Bomb Blast."

¹⁶ Ibid.

This angry interest in domestic politics is evident in the letter that Fazul wrote to his brother Omar in 1991.¹⁷

Radicalization

Though clearly religious in childhood, there are no indications that Fazul held radical or even particularly conservative beliefs up to this point.¹⁸ This definitely changed, however, when Fazul, at age 16, left the tutelage of Fundi Muhammad Ali for that of Soidiki M'Bapandza, the islands' most prominent Salafi/Wahhabi sheikh. Fundi Soidiki, who was once a leader of an Islamist opposition party in the Comoros, runs a number of madrasas in the Hadoudja district of Moroni that teach a Saudi-designed curriculum in place of the government-approved curriculum taught at the other Comoran madrasas. Unlike the other madrasas, at Soidiki's school the sexes are strictly segregated and girls must fully cover their heads. The local Muslim establishment expresses suspicion about Soidiki and his school; he and his students do not attend the public mosques or join the wider community in religious festivals, and it is well known on the islands that he is supported by Saudi money. In fact, soon after Fazul enrolled in Soidiki's school it began to receive financing from the al-Haramayn Foundation,¹⁹ an organization which was functionally an extension of al-Qa'ida, and one with which Fazul would work closely on a number of occasions in his subsequent career as an al-Qa'ida operative. This was one of the earliest financing ventures of the organization outside of South Asia, and began even before al-Haramayn moved its headquarters from Karachi to Riyadh in 1992.

Fazul apparently spent two years studying with Soidiki. His future wife also studied at the school, though on account of their age difference they did not attend the madrasa at the same time. At age 18, at the end of his course of study with Soidiki, Fazul received a scholarship to study abroad. It may be that this money came from al-Haramayn, though a Comoran official and members of Fazul's family told one reporter in 1998 that the money had come from a Sudanese group called *al-Jabha*, or "The Front," which is very likely none other than the National Islamic Front (*al-Jabha al-Islamiyya al-Qawmiyya*) of Hassan al-Turabi, which in the following year would become the host of Osama bin Laden.²⁰ Either way, Fazul would have been traveling on al-Qa'ida-connected money.

¹⁷ Fazul refers in that letter to four Comoran politicians, one of whom (Moustoifa Said Cheikh, leader of the Front Démocratique des Comores) he claims attempted to encompass the death of his teacher Soidiki, and implies his desire to kill these men. When police searched the Fazul family home in Moroni in Sept. 1998 they found a "list of prominent Comorans who would have to be killed to make way for fundamentalist rule" (McNeil, "Assets of a Bombing Suspect").

¹⁸ In the autobiographical manuscript described in "On the Trail of Man Wanted for Bomb Blast," however, Fazul says that he knew what he wanted to do from a very young age. One might also consider his response to classmates who mispronounced words from the Qur'an as an early indication of his willingness to turn to violence in defence of Islam.

¹⁹ Pérouse de Montclos, Profile of the al-Haramayn Foundation.

²⁰ Vick, "FBI Trails Embassy Bombing Suspect." This information is somewhat dubious, however, since these same sources told Vick that the money was for study *in* Sudan, and that Fazul went to study there. There is no doubt that Fazul went to Pakistan on his scholarship, *not* Sudan, though he may have told some people he was going to Sudan to hide his intentions to join the jihad in Afghanistan. In his letter to his

Given Soidiki's profile and his financial connections with al-Qa'ida-affiliated organizations, it is probable that Fazul's radicalization occurred while studying with this teacher. In his 1991 letter to his brother Omar as well as in the autobiographical manuscript discovered by police in 2005, Fazul clearly indicates that he brought his radical beliefs with him when he first left for Pakistan.

Joining al-Qa'ida

Fazul flew to Karachi, Pakistan in 1990, soon after the withdrawal of the Soviet army from Afghanistan. He enrolled as a medical student in an un-named Pakistani university, switched almost immediately to Islamic studies, and was recruited before the end of his first year of studies to train to become a *mujahid* (holy warrior) in Afghanistan. He does not name the person who connected him to the mujahidin, but within his first year in Pakistan he found himself at the Bayt al-Ansar in Peshawar, founded by Osama bin Laden and `Abdullah `Azzam. Fazul writes that he saw both of these men lecture at the Bayt al-Ansar during his time there.²¹ This was the first "guest-house" that foreign fighters would stay at in Peshawar before being taken to a first-level training camp in Afghanistan. Those who stood out in the initial training would be invited to receive more advanced training at further camps. Fazul was selected in this manner and given two months of training in small arms, heavy weapons, explosives and bomb-making, surveillance evasion, guerrilla warfare and even "how to kill a president in full view while he's with his bodyguards."²² Among his trainers was Ali Abdelsoud Mohammad, the former major in the Egyptian army who later joined the U.S. Army and attempted to infiltrate the FBI and CIA as a double agent; Ali admitted to having trained Fazul in 1991 and 1992.²³

In his 1991 letter to his brother Omar, Fazul says that he has "joined their group," that he "got confirmed" with al-Qa'ida. It was not long before he was given his first mission – help train the Somali Islamist militias that were opposing the United Nations intervention there.²⁴ This was in early spring of 1993, and Fazul was sent with a larger group of operatives that included Ali A. Mohammad, Abu Ubayda al-Banshiri, Mohammad Saddiq Odeh, Muhammed Atef, and Saif al-Adel. Ali Mohammad was sent to Nairobi to case targets, and the U.S. Embassy there was identified as a future target at this time.²⁵ In his 1997 report on the East Africa al-Qa'ida cell, Fazul refers to the fact that this team sent to Somalia in 1993 was directly involved in the so-called Battle of Mogadishu of October '93, during which two U.S. Black Hawk helicopters were shot

brother Omar, he asks that Omar not tell the rest of the family that he's in Afghanistan, writing that "it is totally normal in the face of God to lie – it is for the good of Muslims."

²¹ "On the Trail of Man Wanted for Bomb Blast."

²² Fazul, letter to his brother Omar, 1991.

²³ Weiser, "U.S. Charges Ex-Soldier"; on Ali Mohammad, see Wright, *The Looming Tower*, pp. 179ff.

²⁴ *U.S. v. Usama Bin Laden et al.*, S(9) 98 Cr. 1023, Indictment, pp. 16f.

²⁵ International Crisis Group, "Counter-Terrorism in Somalia," p. 7.

down and 18 U.S. soldiers were killed.²⁶ The Somali group that these al-Qa'ida operatives worked most closely with was al-Ittihad al-Islami, which was partly funded by the al-Haramayn Foundation.²⁷ The leadership of this group went on to lead the Council of Islamic Courts (CIC, a.k.a. Islamic Courts Union), which recently controlled much of Somalia and offered refuge to al-Qa'ida; in January of 2007 the CIC was routed by the Ethiopian Army, with support from the U.S.

The following year Fazul returned briefly to the Comoros. He asked his father to take him to his uncle's house on one of the other islands. Fazul asked his uncle for his cousin Halima's hand in marriage; Halima was 17 at the time, was still studying at Soidiki's madrasa, and had never met Fazul before then. In her deposition to a Comoran magistrate, Halima gives the date of their marriage as April 4, 1994. Three weeks later they moved to Kenya, remaining there until December of that year; at this time Fazul assumed the pseudonym Haroun Fazul. Also in 1994, Fazul accompanied Wadih al-Hage, who was working as Osama bin Laden's secretary in Khartoum, to the wedding in Mombasa of Mohammad Siddiq Odeh. These three would later be part of the cell that organized and carried out the bombings of the Kenyan and Tanzanian U.S. Embassy in 1998.

1994-1998: Bombing the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi

The embassy bombings took nearly five years of preparation and planning, and Fazul was centrally involved at every step along the way. Following Ali Mohammad's target-identification activities in Nairobi, an apartment was rented there in January of 1994; Fazul lived there for much of the year, and his new wife Halima joined him in May. Fazul was a relatively low-level al-Qa'ida operative at this stage and would remain so until after the embassy bombings. He was directed by Wadih al-Hage and Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah, and, beginning with his 1997 promotion to media and communications officer for the East Africa cell, he communicated with the al-Qa'ida high command via the London-based Khalid al-Fawwaz.²⁸

At the end of 1994 Fazul moved his family to Khartoum, joining the contingent of al-Qa'ida families that had relocated there from South Asia with Osama bin Laden. From this point to the spring of 1996 Fazul moved relatively frequently between Khartoum, Nairobi and Mogadishu, undertaking a variety of tasks related to the plot. Travel between these points was facilitated by the existence of an underground transportation network used in the movement of qat (also spelled khat), a plant chewed for its narcotic properties.²⁹ In Nairobi he worked under the cover of a bogus charity founded there by

²⁶ In that report Fazul writes that his cell is likely in danger of being targeted by agents of the U.S. "since America knows well that the youth who lived in Somalia and were member's of the Shaykh's [sc. Usama's] cell are the ones who killed the Americans in Somalia."

²⁷ International Crisis Group, "Counter-Terrorism in Somalia," pp. 2ff.; Pérouse de Montclos, Profile of the al-Haramayn Foundation.

²⁸ Fazul refers to his appointment to this position by Fawwaz in his 1997 report.

²⁹ *Anatomy of a Terrorist Attack*, p. 45. Odeh testified in U.S. court that he traveled between Nairobi and Mogadishu on the airplanes of qat smugglers. Because qat must be chewed within days of harvest for the active ingredient to work, the smuggling infrastructure has to be quick and reliable.

Wadih al-Hage with the morbidly ironic name of Help Africa People. The Nairobi cell also worked very closely with Mercy International Relief Agency, an organization run by the Salafi ideologue Safar al-Hawali, and the Nairobi branch of the al-Haramayn Foundation; both of these groups supported the Ittihad al-Islami group.³⁰ Fazul also had courier responsibilities, ferrying money between different members of the African cells; Fazul carried money from Abu Ubayda al-Banshiri to several members of the Nairobi group at various times.³¹ In 1996 he and Wadih al-Hage transported \$7,000 from Osama to a contact in Mombasa.³² Key leaders of al-Ittihad al-Islami (and later of the Somalian Council of Islamic Courts), including Hassan Dahir Aweys and Hassan Turki, were also involved in the preparations, and helped provide shelter, identity and travel documents and access to the massive Somalian arms market.³³

In May of 1996, when al-Qa'ida closed up shop in Sudan and Osama returned to Afghanistan, Fazul returned with his wife to the Comoros; around this time their first child was born, a daughter whom they named Afiya.³⁴ Fazul stayed for most of May before returning to Kenya, and his family joined him there later that summer.³⁵ Fazul's early return was eventuated by the 21 May sinking of a steamship on Lake Victoria, one of whose passengers was senior al-Qa'ida military commander Abu Ubayda al-Banshiri (a.k.a. Adel Habib). Joined by Wadih al-Hage and other operatives, Fazul stayed in Mwanza, Tanzania for several days to confirm that Banshiri had died, and then reported the news back to Osama.

In 1997 things became more difficult for the Nairobi cell. Fazul wrote during that summer that Osama's declaration of war upon America put the cell at serious risk of capture, and complained that he had had to learn of it from CNN.³⁶ He also wrote of his alarm at seeing a CNN report about the capture of an al-Qa'ida operative close to bin Laden; Fazul correctly believed this person to be Abu al-Fadl al-Makki, though he was not thus identified in the press. In response to this, Fazul gathered Wadih al-Hage's files and hid them somewhere in Nairobi.³⁷ Also that summer, the FBI raided Wadih al-Hage's home, seizing a large amount of digital and paper data, but due to lack of Arabic-speaking resources, the material was left mostly untranslated. Around the same time, the CIA raided the Nairobi offices of the al-Haramayn Foundation, but soon thereafter the agency dropped its investigation.³⁸

³⁰ International Crisis Group, "Counter-terrorism in Somalia," p. 7.

³¹ *U.S. v. Usama Bin Laden et al.*, S(7) 98 Cr. 1023, S.D.N.Y., testimony of Sikander Juma (a.k.a. Ashkar Hussein), trial transcript of day 31, April 18, 2001, p. 4287.

³² *U.S. v. Usama Bin Laden et al.*, S(9) 98 Cr. 1023, Indictment, p. 23.

³³ International Crisis Group, "Counter-terrorism in Somalia," pp. 7f.

³⁴ They had a son (Lukman) the following year and another daughter (Sumeiya) in 2002.

³⁵ Halima Fazul, deposition.

³⁶ Fazul, August 1997 letter to "brother Sharif."

³⁷ Details about the contents of these files can be found in *U.S. v. Usama Bin Laden et al.*, S(9) 98 Cr. 1023, Indictment, p. 28.

³⁸ *Anatomy of a Terrorist Attack*, p. 30.

After these near misses, the cell went ahead with the execution of the bombing plot. Fazul made frequent trips between Nairobi and Khartoum during this period.³⁹ On May 1, with the help of a local named Sikander Juma, Fazul rented a large walled villa in the suburbs of Nairobi, at 43 New Runda Estates. Though he told the property owner (one Tamarra Ratemo) that he needed the large house for his family and business guests, in fact his family lived with the Jumas and at Wadih al-Hage's home in Nairobi; the villa was used as the bomb factory for the Nairobi embassy bombing. Throughout the spring and summer, Fazul was one of the key players in the lead-up to the bombing, and on the morning of August 7, 1998, he drove a white pick-up truck ahead of the bomb truck to the embassy. At 10:45 AM local time, two vehicle-borne bombs were detonated outside the U.S. Embassy, killing 224 and wounding more than 4000 people. Later that day Fazul arranged for his family and father-in-law to fly to the Comoros, and that evening he arranged for the keys of the villa to be handed over to the owner, having already hired local people to clean it out. He stayed on in Nairobi for another week, and on August 14 flew to the Comoros; on the 22nd he left the Comoros for Dubai and from there most likely proceeded to Pakistan.⁴⁰

The leadership of the East African cell up to this point had been provided by Wadih el-Hage and then, after al-Hage's return to the U.S. in 1997, Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah. On August 1, 1998, the latter directed all al-Qa'ida personnel to leave Kenya by the 6th of that month. This provides an indication of Fazul's "rank" in the organization at this time. The last to leave Nairobi, a full week after the bombing, Fazul had an intermediate position between the administrative leadership, which came to Nairobi in the week before the bombing to oversee the final preparations, and the foot-soldiers, who were all supposed to die in the attacks (Rashid al-Owhali survived and was later arrested). His letter of 1997 included the statement that "we do not want to know the operations plans since we are just implementers." After the summer of 1998, this began to change, and ultimately Fazul would take over the leadership of al-Qa'ida's operations in East Africa.

1999-2001: al-Qa'ida, Liberia and West African Blood Diamonds⁴¹

In the year following the embassy bombings Fazul became one of the key players in al-Qa'ida's entry into the blood diamond business. After the embassy bombings, the U.S. began to take steps to freeze al-Qa'ida's assets, and in response al-Qa'ida began to sink millions of dollars into West African blood diamonds, an ideal way to launder, protect and increase its financial resources. Fazul would spend the bulk of this period in West Africa as a protected guest of Charles Taylor and one of the two al-Qa'ida members who oversaw the organization's end of Taylor's diamond business.

³⁹ According to *U.S. v. Usama Bin Laden et al.*, S(9) 98 Cr. 1023, Indictment, pp. 26ff., Fazul flew from Khartoum to Nairobi on March 4, April 28 and May 10 of 1998.

⁴⁰ A detailed timeline of the embassy bombings can be found in *Anatomy of a Terrorist Attack*, pp. 63ff.

⁴¹ A much more detailed account of al-Qa'ida's relationship to the West African diamond trade can be found in Douglas Farah's *Blood From Stones*.

The relationship began in 22 September 1998, less than two months after the embassy bombings, when Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah arrived in Monrovia, Liberia, to meet with Ibrahim Bah, a Senegalese soldier of fortune who was part of Taylor's inner circle and had the rank of general in the Sierra Leonean Revolutionary United Front (RUF), which was controlled directly by Taylor.⁴² Bah introduced Abdullah to senior RUF commanders, including Sam Bockerie, and it was agreed that Abdullah would later send al-Qa'ida representatives with cash. In March of 1999, Fazul and Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani⁴³ came to Liberia and spent several days touring the diamond fields in Sierra Leone controlled by the RUF. They met with Bockerie in Foya, Liberia and gave him \$50,000 in cash; they were given a package of diamonds in return, and then made calls by satellite phone to Belgium and Pakistan. They then met with Taylor at his Congo Town home and gave him half a million dollars in cash.

In December of 2000, the two met with the Lebanese diamond dealers Samih Ossaily and Allie Darwish in Liberia and Sierra Leone, and another large transaction was made. On January 22, 2001, the two Lebanese dealers signed a three year lease on a large house in Monrovia that would become the headquarters of Fazul and Ghailani on their frequent trips to Liberia in this period. They came on March 3 using Yemeni passports and stayed on through the mining season, to the end of summer; during this period al-Qa'ida cornered the market on Liberian and Sierra Leonean diamonds, which are among the highest quality diamonds in the world. In late June, along with a female al-Qa'ida operative using the pseudonym Feriel Shahin, Fazul and Abdullah flew to Karachi, stayed several nights at the Shaharah-e Faisal hotel, and then proceeded to Quetta.

In July 2001 Fazul and Abdullah returned to West Africa, staying initially at the presidential complex of Blaise Campaore in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. In that same month, Aziz Nassour, another Lebanese diamond dealer and cousin of Ossaily, flew from Beirut to Dubai to pick up \$1 million in cash; this was then delivered to Taylor as an up-front payment for offering the two al-Qa'ida operatives a safe haven. Once the cash was delivered, the two moved from Burkina Faso to a military camp near Taylor's private farm called Camp Gbatala, where Liberia's elite Anti-Terrorism Unit trained with South African mercenaries. They remained in hiding there until at least December of 2001. In late November, on the basis of European intelligence indicating that the two were in Camp Gbatala, the DIA stood up a snatch team of Special Forces, but, unable to confirm the identifications, the team was told to stand down a week later.

The relationship with Taylor and his RUF allies maintained by Fazul and Abdullah was hugely successful for al-Qa'ida. More than \$20 million was moved by al-Qa'ida in this way, and firm ties were made with important actors in the international

⁴² Farah, "Al Qaeda Cash Tied to Diamond Trade." Bah fought with Senegalese separatists in the 1970s, went on to train with Qaddafi in Libya, fought with the mujahidin in Afghanistan in the 1980s (where he made his initial contacts with future al-Qa'ida leadership), and later trained a number of people who became West African warlords, including Taylor and Foday Sankoh, founder of the RUF. As of the late 1990s, Bah was in charge of Taylor's diamond-related activities and was the conduit point between RUF commanders and al-Qa'ida and Hezbollah diamond buyers.

⁴³ Ghailani was arrested in Pakistan in 2004.

black market in blood diamonds and weapons. There is evidence that suggests the two bought weapons through Nassour and Ossaily, possibly even SA-8 surface-to-air missiles.⁴⁴ The large sum paid to Taylor to protect Fazul and Abdullah, probably in anticipation of a worldwide manhunt in the wake of 9/11, is an indication of Fazul's rise in the organization, or at the very least shows that he was recognized by this point as an extremely valuable asset.

2002-2007: Leading the East Africa cell

Fazul's next assignment was to assume a leading role in al-Qa'ida's East Africa operations. His base of operations for 2002 was the village of Siyu on the Lamu Archipelago on the northern coast of Kenya, where he lived under the pseudonym Abdulkarim.⁴⁵ In that remote village of around 2,000 people Fazul set up shop as a preacher and madrasa teacher, establishing his own madrasa for this purpose. He was joined there by a number of other operatives who would go on to participate in an attack in Mombasa towards the end of the year; some of them worked as fishermen, others worked with Fazul as preachers and missionaries. Their message as preachers was predictably Salafi in tone; the village chief later testified that "they were teaching against the celebration of Maulid (the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad) and the people were not pleased with it."⁴⁶ Fazul also married a local girl in Siyu, 16-year-old Amina Kubwa,⁴⁷ and recruited her father, brother and one of her cousins to help with the November bombings.⁴⁸ In July of 2002 Fazul was arrested by Kenyan police for credit card fraud, but he escaped after only one day in custody; the Kenyan authorities claim they didn't recognize him.⁴⁹

The beginnings of the bombing plot of 2002 began in November of 2001, when several members of the team gathered in Mogadishu and began training in rented apartments in small arms and explosives.⁵⁰ Throughout the year, Fazul would occasionally come in to Mogadishu to oversee the progress of the team there. By April 2002 the targets were identified and by August the group had smuggled a number of SA-7b Grail missiles and shoulder-launchers into Kenya from Somalia by sea; the weapons had been earlier bought in Yemen.⁵¹ On November 28, the team split into four groups; one group stayed in Mombasa, one went to Mombasa to suicide bomb the Paradise Hotel,⁵² one went to Lamu to prepare an escape boat, and the final group, led by Fazul, carried out the failed missile attack on an Israeli passenger plane as it left Moi

⁴⁴ Farah, "Report Says Africans Harbored Al Qaeda."

⁴⁵ Interestingly, Fazul's association with Lamu goes back much further; he listed it as his birthplace in a Kenyan identity card that he illegally obtained in 1996 (Vick, "FBI Trails Embassy Bombing Suspect").

⁴⁶ "Witness tells of terror suspect's marriage."

⁴⁷ Mutonya and Munene, "Woman helps identify bomb raid suspects." Muiruri, "Most wanted terrorist named," writes that she was 14 at the time of marriage.

⁴⁸ These were Kubwa Muhammad, Muhammad Kubwa and Abud Rogo Muhammad, respectively (Lacey, "Kenya to Charge 4").

⁴⁹ "Bush should heed Hempstone's advice."

⁵⁰ Peleman et al., *Report of the Panel of Experts*, p. 29.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² A three-man team drove an explosives-laden SUV onto the lobby steps of the hotel; the detonation killed 13 and injured 80 people.

International Airport in Mombasa. The following day Fazul returned with some of the team to Lamu and escaped by boat, most likely to Somalia.

The following two years had Fazul planning further bomb attacks in the area. In early 2003 he was sighted at a mosque in Mogadishu, and in May he was spotted in Mombasa. The CIA contracted with Muhammad Dheere, a warlord based north of Mogadishu, to try to capture Fazul after these sightings, but the operation instead netted a lesser al-Qa'ida operative, a Yemeni by the name of Sulayman Abdullah Salim Hemed.⁵³ He informed police that Fazul was planning an attack on the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, and it subsequently closed down for a week.⁵⁴ The following year communications from Saleh Nabhan, a senior member of al-Qa'ida's East Africa cell, were intercepted, leading ultimately to the uncovering and therefore thwarting of a plot to bomb the new U.S. Embassy in Nairobi sometime in 2004. The plan was to drive a bomb truck into the Embassy and at the same time to fly a chartered airplane into the building.

Following this unsuccessful plot, nothing is known about Fazul's operational activities, though he does appear to have had a high-level position within the Council of Islamic Courts in Somalia since at least 2005, possibly as head of intelligence.⁵⁵ He was spotted during March of that year taking a *kwassa kwassa* (a kind of boat) from Moroni to the island of Mayotte.⁵⁶ He continued to work with the CIC in Somalia through 2006, and at the end of December had his wife Halima and their three children join him in Mogadishu from Pakistan.⁵⁷

On January 8 and 9, 2007, at least one U.S. C-130 gunship attacked targets in Somalia in an attempt to kill Fazul and two other senior al-Qa'ida operatives.⁵⁸ It was initially reported that Fazul had died, but this was later retracted. On January 11, Kenyan police captured Fazul's wife and three children, along with other operatives and their family members attempting to flee Somalia. The group initially included Fazul; they stopped for the night in a forest in Kiunga on the Kenyan border, and Fazul and three other men set off alone. The rest of the party was arrested there in the morning. Fazul's wife was arrested with his laptop computer and more than \$5,000 in cash. According to Kenyan police, who managed to bypass the password protect on the laptop in late January, the computer contained "vital information on terrorism training and intelligence collection including spying."⁵⁹ Members of the elite U.S. anti-terrorism Task Force 88 are currently on the ground in East Africa searching for Fazul. According to a Madagascar newspaper, there had been claims of a sighting of Fazul at Majunga, a port

⁵³ Butler, "5-Year Hunt Fails to Net Qaeda Suspect." Hemed was captured in June of 2003.

⁵⁴ "Target of U.S. strike wanted for multiple attacks."

⁵⁵ "Computer May Hold Clue on Terror Suspect."

⁵⁶ Rodier, "Chasse aux djihadists"; D.H., "Un lieutenant de Ben Laden à l'île de Mayotte?"

⁵⁷ "Computer May Hold Clue on Terror Suspect."

⁵⁸ U.S. military assets were already active in the area in support of the Ethiopian army's invasion force that ousted the CIC from its areas of control beginning in December 2006 and continuing to the present date into early 2007.

⁵⁹ "Kenya: We have hacked al-Qaida laptop."

city on the northwest coast of Madagascar, in the weeks following the U.S. bombing operation in Somalia.⁶⁰

Though the chances of catching Fazul are as good now as they've ever been, it won't be easy. He has used dozens if not scores of pseudonyms,⁶¹ has extensive contacts with virtually every kind of criminal underground in the region, and, as the photographs at the head of this profile attest, he is skilled at disguising his appearance. In his al-Qa'ida career he has successfully passed as a Kenyan, a Somali, a Sudanese, a Moroccan, a Yemeni and a South Asian, and he has command of at least five languages. Highly intelligent and thoroughly trained, he is one the most dangerous international terrorists alive today.⁶²

⁶⁰ "Qaida-Terrorist versteckt sich in Madagaskar."

⁶¹ In addition to the many permutations of Abdullah Muhammad Fazul, his known pseudonyms include the following: Abu Aisha, Abu Luqman, Abu Sayf al-Sudani, Harun al-Qamar, Ahmad Hassan, Abdulkarim, 'Ali Fadil Husayn and Fu'ad Muhammad.

⁶² Harmony documents pertaining to Fazul are: AFGP-2002-800080, AFGP-2002-800081, AFGP-2002-800083, AFGP-2002-800084, AFGP-2002-800086, AFGP-2002-800087, and AFGP-2002-800089.; also see Appendix C-III.

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⁶⁴ Kindly shared with the CTC by Bryan Bender, a journalist at the Boston Globe.

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II. Abu Hafs al-Masri



Judging by the praise heaped upon him by other jihadis, Abu Hafs al-Masri⁶⁶ was one of al-Qa'ida's most talented, trusted, and militant members. Truly in Osama bin Laden's inner circle, he had been involved with al-Qa'ida since its inception and served as its military commander and security chief.⁶⁷ He was present at several key moments in the formation of al-Qa'ida and even sat at bin Laden's side during his infamous press conference in 1998 when bin Laden formally established the formation of the "World Islamic Front for Jihad Against the Jews and Crusaders."⁶⁸ As al-Qa'ida's military commander, Abu Hafs' key duties were recruiting, vetting, and training new al-Qa'ida members as well as planning and facilitating terrorist attacks. He was involved in organizing some of the group's more spectacular attacks, including the U.S Embassy bombings in East Africa and 9/11. His importance and influence on Osama bin Laden and the al-Qa'ida organization cannot be overstressed. In fact, ten months before Abu Hafs' death, bin Laden personally nominated him as his replacement.⁶⁹

While little is known about his childhood years, it is believed that Abu Hafs was born in Menoufya, Egypt on June 17, 1944. Little else is mentioned about his upbringing or teenage years. Most information about him begins as a young adult when he lived in the Asyut region of Egypt. There he was briefly a student at Asyut University, but soon dropped out after he became involved with the militant Islamist group Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ). In 1980, he entered the police force with the intention of infiltrating its ranks in order to help EIJ militants seize weapons for their struggle against the government. Fearing eventual capture and exposure as an EIJ member, he moved to

⁶⁶ He is most commonly referred to as Abu Hafs and Muhammed Atef. Allegedly his real name is Subhi Abu-Sittah, but his other aliases include Subhi Abd-al-Aziz Abu-Sittah, Sheikh Tasser Abdullah, Taysir, Abu Fatima and Al Khabir.

⁶⁷ Abu Hafs' daughter married Osama bin Laden's son Mohammed in February, 2001, further cementing their strong personal and professional relationship.

⁶⁸ Wright, *The Looming Tower*. pp. 131-133.

⁶⁹ "Profile: Abu Hafs al-Masri," Al Jazeera.net, May 10, 2004, <http://english.aljazeera.net/English/archive/archive?ArchiveId=2379>.

Cairo where he was eventually imprisoned and sentenced to five years for his subversive activities.⁷⁰

Although much of the information available supports the assumption that he was indeed an Egyptian policeman and a member of EIJ, some dispute these claims. For example, in a 2001 *Guardian* interview, Montasser al-Zayat, an Islamist lawyer and former associate of Ayman al-Zawahiri, suggested that Abu Hafs was not one of the EIJ members swept up after the assassination of Sadat. In the same article, Egyptian Interior Ministry officials state that Abu Hafs was never a policeman and had no arrests prior to leaving for Afghanistan.⁷¹ Regardless of what the truth is about his background, Abu Hafs eventually left Egypt to travel to South Asia in order to join the anti-Soviet jihad, and later, al-Qa'ida.

Abu Hafs likely arrived in Pakistan and later Afghanistan during the mid-1980s. Once in Peshawar, Pakistan, he linked up with Osama bin Laden and Abdullah Azzam and became involved in their Maktab al-Khidmat, or Services Bureau, which facilitated jihadis' travels to Afghanistan to fight the Soviets. Bin Laden personally authorized a \$200-a-month salary for Hafs' work at the Services Bureau starting in early 1987.⁷² However, he was not satisfied with just playing a supporting role in the jihad and eventually decided to join the fighting in Afghanistan. Bin Laden, Abu Hafs and several other Arab jihadis left Peshawar and established one of the first all-Arab camps in Jaji, Afghanistan called the Masada (Lion's Den). The camp was located in close proximity to a large Soviet Army garrison and eventually Soviet forces attacked the Lion's Den in mid-1997. A month-long battle ensued with the Soviets initially gaining the upper hand, but they eventually retreated after several counterattacks by the Arabs. It was after this battle that Osama bin Laden, Abu Hafs, Abu Ubaydah al-Banshiri, and other Afghan-Arabs began attracting widespread attention in the Arab world for their "heroic efforts."⁷³ Already battle-proven and fully dedicated to jihad, Abu Hafs undoubtedly made a huge impression on Osama bin Laden. Perhaps as a reward and a token of gratitude, bin Laden then designated him as al-Qa'ida's security chief responsible for bin Laden's safety and the screening of guests. During this period of time, Abu Hafs also held the role of the number two military commander behind Abu Ubaydah.⁷⁴

Abu Hafs followed bin Laden to the Sudan in 1992, where he continued to help actively plan and coordinate training, plot terrorist attacks, and set up al-Qa'ida cells. In

⁷⁰ Zaynah, "Muhammed Atif, Defendant Accused of Planning the 11 September Attacks and Al-Aq'ida Organization's Military Official," *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, October 8, 2001; "Profile: Abu Hafs al-Masri," "Atef, Muhammed, MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Database, January 16, 2007, <http://www.tkb.org/KeyLeader.jsp?memID=5823>.

⁷¹ Dawoud, "Mohammed Atef," *The Guardian*, November 19, 2001, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/waronterror/story/0,,597355,00.html>; Muhammed Salah, "Egypt Supplies United States with Information About 'Abu-Hafs,'" *Al-Hayah*, December 6, 1998;

⁷² A raid on the al-Haramayn office in Sarajevo in 2002 produced a document from a laptop that supports the claim that Abu Hafs was one of the first, future members of al-Qa'ida to be involved in the Services Bureau; Peter Bergen, *The Osama bin Laden I Know*, p. 77.

⁷³ Wright, p. 116-120.

⁷⁴ Rahimullah Yusufzai, "An Insider's Guide to bin Laden's Shadowy Cabinet," *The Sunday Times*, September 30, 2001.

1992 and 1993, bin Laden sent him to Somalia to make contact with local tribes and give them assistance in their fight against United Nations and U.S. forces involved in Operation Restore Hope. Abu Hafs apparently returned to Peshawar sometime in 1993, where he tasked and prepared several al-Qa'ida members for missions into Kenya, Somalia, and Ogaden to recon sites and establish training camps. He then returned to Africa where he visited his teams in Somalia and offered help to the Somali Islamic Union.⁷⁵ However, in late 1993, Abu Hafs ordered some of those same camps closed due to security and other problems.⁷⁶ He also helped establish cover companies in Nairobi and Mombassa, Kenya, in order to fund al-Qa'ida's African operations.⁷⁷ Abu Hafs often met and guided other top al-Qa'ida members and trainers while in Africa and helped plot the bombings in Kenya and Tanzania. Although five years before the actual attacks occurred, Abu Hafs met with Ali Mohammed, another Egyptian al-Qa'ida member, and Osama bin Laden in Khartoum, Sudan, in 1993 to discuss Mohammed's recon efforts of Western embassies in Nairobi.⁷⁸ In 1996, Abu Hafs became the primary military commander of al-Qa'ida after Abu Ubaydah died in a ferry accident on Lake Victoria. In that same year, al-Qa'ida was kicked out of the Sudan and moved its operations back to Afghanistan.

During his tenure as military chief in Afghanistan, Abu Hafs' main responsibilities were to oversee the training at terrorist camps and make decisions regarding which trainees would receive additional instruction (in assassinations, urban warfare, bomb and poison making, etc.) after their initial training. He also hand-picked the operatives who would take part in suicide attacks, as well as the bodyguards for bin Laden.⁷⁹ Abu Hafs paid special attention to Western converts, Muslims from Western European countries, and non-Arab trainees as they possessed freedom of movement through their home countries that other members did not. He met with Jose Padilla several times, tasking him first with exploding apartment buildings in the US.⁸⁰ Abu Hafs also met with John Walker Lindh and sent Zacarias Moussaoui to Malaysia to work with Jemaah Islamiah.⁸¹ Lastly and most ominously, Abu Hafs was one of the most adamant members concerning the group's procurement, production, and use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Although it probably did not take too much effort, he eventually convinced Osama bin Laden to pursue the procurement and production of WMD agents.⁸²

In mid-1996, Abu Hafs and Osama bin Laden met with Khalid Sheikh Muhammed (KSM) in Tora Bora, Afghanistan. Although he was not an "official" al-Qa'ida member at the time, KSM discussed several possible plots, including using

⁷⁵ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600104.

⁷⁶ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600110; Harmony, AFGP-2002-800597.

⁷⁷ Bergen, pp. 211, 214-215, 221; Rubin and Judith Colp Rubin, eds., *Anti-American Terrorism and the Middle East*, p. 211; *USA vs. bin Laden et al.*

⁷⁸ Rubin, p. 209.

⁷⁹ Bergen, p. 264.

⁸⁰ Remarks of Deputy Attorney General James Comey Regarding Jose Padilla, June 1, 2004, <http://www.usdoj.gov/dag/speech/2004/dag6104.htm>.

⁸¹ Bergen, p. 277; *The 9/11 Commission Report*, p. 151.

⁸² Wright, p. 304.

airplanes as missiles, to attack targets inside the United States. KSM's ideas must have struck a cord with Abu Hafs, who two years later, would push Osama bin Laden to act on KSM's vision. This plan, obviously, became the 9/11 attacks. In fact, Abu Hafs, Osama bin Laden, and KSM were the only al-Qa'ida members to be involved in target selection for 9/11.⁸³

Fortunately, Abu Hafs was killed in an al-Qa'ida safehouse in Kabul, Afghanistan, in November of 2001, when it was bombed by coalition aircraft. This was a significant blow to al-Qa'ida, as they lost one of their most stalwart and capable members. Moreover, it was a huge loss to bin Laden who lost not only his senior military commander, but also a close companion who had been with him since the very beginning of the al-Qa'ida organization.⁸⁴

⁸³ *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States*, pp.148-150; Wright, pp. 307-308; Bergen, pp.300-301.

⁸⁴ Other Harmony documents that contain information on Abu Hafs: AFGP-2002-003677 and AFGP-2002-800573.

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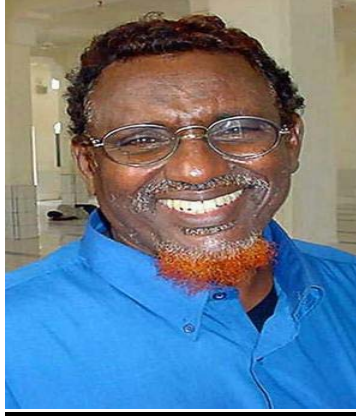
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III. Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys



Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys was born in the Galgaduud region of Somalia between 1935 and 1943. He is a member of the Ayr sub-clan of the Habargadir group of the Hawiye clan. Although not the most powerful sub-clan in Somalia, Ayr is reportedly one of the most powerful clans in Mogadishu.⁸⁵

Aweys began preaching Wahhabi ideology in the late 1970s, but he first achieved notoriety as a Somali colonel decorated for bravery in 1977 during Somalia's war with Ethiopia.⁸⁶ Several sources indicate that he was a "prisons Colonel,"⁸⁷ although his citation for bravery and his later position as Military Chief of al-Ittihad al-Islami suggest that he assumed an operational role during wartime.

Al-Ittihad al-Islami (Islamic Unity, AIAI), established in the early 1980s, was one of several Islamist organizations that sought to overthrow Siad Barre, Somalia's dictator of 22 years. The organization began its ascent in the Gedo region of Somalia, a crossroads for Islamic fundamentalists.⁸⁸ In the absence of effective government services, AIAI offered protection for businesses and localities, established schools, and provided rule-of-law in a country ravaged by warlords. Sheikh Hassan Aweys served as both a spiritual and military leader for the increasingly profitable and powerful organization. In both of his roles, Aweys promulgated AIAI's ultimate goal of establishing an Islamic caliphate in the horn of Africa governed exclusively by *sharia* law.

⁸⁵ "Somalia Government Tries to Confirm Terrorist's Death," *Voice of America*, January 10, 2007.

⁸⁶ Winter, "Profile: Somalia's Islamist Leader," *BBC News*, June 30, 2006, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/5120242.stm>.

⁸⁷ Sii'arag, "The Birth and Rise of Al-Ittihad Al-Islami in the Somali Inhabited Regions in the Horn of Africa," Nzwili, "Terrorism Focus: Leadership Profile: Islamic Courts Union."

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

AIAI rose to prominence in the early 1990's upon Siad Barre's ouster. The organization claimed responsibility for two fatal attacks in 1996: the shooting of two Ethiopian businessmen in Somalia and the bombing of a hotel in Addis Ababa that killed 4 and injured 20 civilians.⁸⁹ AIAI has also been implicated in a second 1996 bomb attack in Ethiopia, the assassination and attempted assassination of Ethiopian cabinet ministers, support of al-Qa'ida's 1998 embassy bombings, and a suicide-bomb attack on the Paradise Hotel in Mombasa in 2002.⁹⁰

While serving as AIAI's Military Chief in the 1990's, Aweys maintained a relationship with Adan Hashi Ayro. Ayro was trained in Afghanistan, served as a militia commander in AIAI and later in the Council of Islamic Courts, and reportedly sustained direct ties to al-Qa'ida.⁹¹ The exact nature of Aweys' relationship to Ayro is unclear; the Jamestown Press reports that Aweys mentored Ayro, planned military operations in conjunction with him, and organized terrorist training camps with him.⁹² Although Ethiopian military strikes reduced AIAI's size and potency in 1997, both Aweys and Ayro continued to play prominent leadership roles through the establishment of Islamic courts and their associated militias.

Sheikh Hassan Aweys established the first Islamic court in the southern region of Mogadishu following AIAI's retreat from Gedo. In 1999, he became the head of the Southern Mogadishu Islamic Courts, and used the courts to promote Islamist goals similar to those of AIAI.⁹³ On June 24, 2006, Sheikh Hassan Aweys was appointed to the senior leadership role in the Council of Islamic Courts (formerly referred to as the Islamic Courts Union), a collection of previously disassociated courts.⁹⁴ The Council of Islamic Courts has two administrative bodies: an executive committee of 8 persons recently headed by the more moderate Sheikh Sharif Ahmed, and an 80 person shura, or decision-making body, led by Aweys.⁹⁵ In this position, Aweys was one of the most influential individuals in Somalia. He used his position to contest the transitional government in Somalia, prior to the Ethiopian-backed military intervention which expelled the Islamists from Mogadishu in December.

With the status of the Council of Islamic Courts in flux, and Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys' personal future in jeopardy, his next role is uncertain. In February, 2006, on a jihadi website, Aweys purportedly authorized the use of suicide terrorism to attack targets in Ethiopia and Kenya.⁹⁶ More recently, however, Aweys has consistently disavowed any personal links to al-Qa'ida or terrorism. It is difficult to predict whether or not

⁸⁹ MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base, Group Profile: al-Itihaad al-Islami, <http://www.tkb.org/Group.jsp?groupID=4329>.

⁹⁰ Rabasa et. al, *Beyond Al Qaeda*, p. 132.

⁹¹ On January 7, 2006, a U.S. Special Operations-coordinated air strike targeted and killed Ayro in Somalia near the Kenyan border. Gordon and Mazzetti, "US Used Base in Ethiopia to Hunt Al Qaeda."

⁹² Nzwili, *op.cit*

⁹³ Sii'arag.

⁹⁴ "Somalia's Islamic Courts name Radical Cleric as Head of New Parliament."

⁹⁵ Shinn, "Somalia: US Government Policy and Challenges."

⁹⁶ "Somali Islamists threaten suicide attacks in Kenya, Ethiopia."

Aweys will overtly support jihad in the near future, but he is unlikely to back down from his vocal pursuit of an Islamic state.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ Harmony documents concerning Aweys are: AFGP-2002-600114, AFGP-800611, and AFGP-2003-001293H.

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IV. Saif al-Adel



[Saif al-Adel, used in US wanted posters]

Life in Egypt

Saif al-Adel (سيف العدل; also spelled Sayf al-`Adl, Seif al-Adil)⁹⁸, often called the third-ranking official of al-Qa`ida, is a man about whom there is extremely little that is known with certainty.⁹⁹ His date of birth is April 11, 1960 or April 11, 1963. Since the identity behind his *nom de guerre* is unknown, it is impossible to say anything about his family or childhood. There is some indication that he did not have a traditional Islamic education, or if he did that it was not very extensive; in his 2005 memoir about Abu Mus`ab al-Zarqawi, Saif writes that he is partly using an abundance of free time to memorize the Qur`an, a task to which primary Islamic education is almost exclusively devoted.¹⁰⁰ In the same memoir, Saif writes that “God guided me to comprehend pure Islam in the early 1980s,” an indication that his turn to radical Islamism occurred in his early twenties.

At that time Saif had probably already begun his career in the Egyptian army, since by 1987 he had achieved the rank of colonel in the Special Forces.¹⁰¹ In the Spring of 1987 Saif was arrested and charged in Cairo in what was called National Security Case

⁹⁸ Though sometimes conflated, Saif al-Adel is *not* the same person as Sayf al-Islam al-Misri or Sayf al-Din al-Ansari. The former is an al-Qa`ida colleague of Saif al-Adel and the author of a 1994 report on al-Qa`ida operations in Somalia and Ethiopia called “The Ogaden File,” Harmony, AFGP-2002-600104, in which Sayf al-Islam mentions attending a meeting at which Saif al-Adel was also present. Sayf al-Din al-Ansari is a jihadi ideologue and part of the circle of Saudi jihadi authors that includes Abu Sa`d al-`Amili, Abu `Ubayd al-Qurashi and Abu Ayman al-Hilali; his specific relationship with al-Qa`ida is unclear. One of the more prominent conflations of these individuals appears in the MSNBC profile of Saif al-Adel, where his full name is given as “Saif al-Din al-Ansari al-Adel” (<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/8336988/>).

⁹⁹ For the purposes of this profile, “known” refers to what is available in open source documents and in declassified documents from the Harmony database; some of the latter used in this profile are not currently available to the public.

¹⁰⁰ Saif al-Adel, “Detained Al-Qa`ida Leader Sayf al-Adl Chronicles Al-Zarqawi’s Rise in Organization,” hereafter “Zarqawi memoir.” The Arabic original of this memoir can be found at numerous websites and was published in Husayn, *al-Zarqawi al-jil al-thani li’l-Qa`ida*. An English translation can be found here: <http://atc2005.blogspot.com/2006/06/al-zarqawi-second-generation-of-al.html>.

¹⁰¹ According to his Zarqawi memoir.

401, in connection with which thousands of Islamist activists were arrested, and was charged with the crime of attempting to revive the Jihad Organization (*tanzim al-jihad*), which six years earlier had been responsible for the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, and of attempting to assassinate former Egyptian Interior Minister Hasan al-Basha and journalist Makram Muhammad Ahmad.¹⁰² It was also claimed at the trial that he had been involved in a plot to destroy the Egyptian Parliament building by simultaneously driving a bomb-laden truck into the building and crashing a hijacked airplane into it as well. On May 6, with more than 400 others charged in the case, Saif was sent to prison; in his Zargawi memoir he states that one of his fellow inmates was Major Muhammad al-Baram of the Special Forces and Special Guard.

Already at this point in his jihadi career Saif exhibited a tendency toward independence of mind and divisiveness. He writes that, at the time of Case 401,

“I found that the brothers at the Al-Jihad movement and the Islamic Group lacked practical experience that could enable them to achieve the desired change [of society]. In my opinion and the opinion of some brothers, this was due to over-enthusiasm that resulted in hasty action or recklessness at times.”¹⁰³

This disagreement with the Egyptian Islamist groups, along with the growing success of Egyptian and Jordanian security services in infiltrating such groups, led Saif to leave Egypt for Saudi Arabia in 1988, travelling from there to Pakistan.¹⁰⁴

1990s: Military Trainer for al-Qa’ida

Soon after travelling to South Asia Saif became directly involved in the activities of the nascent al-Qa’ida movement. In the first two years of the 1990s he was based in Peshawar, Pakistan, making trips across the Afghan border to serve during this period as a trainer at the Jihad Wal camp, near Khost, Afghanistan. L’Housseine Kherchtou testified to having received explosives training from Saif there in 1991 or ’92.¹⁰⁵ At some point in 1992, Saif travelled to Khartoum and conducted explosives training at the Damazine Farm.¹⁰⁶ In late 1992 Saif told Mohammed Odeh that, as the war in Afghanistan was winding down, al-Qa’ida was going to “move the jihad to other parts of

¹⁰² In an interview with the newspaper *al-Wasat* in November 1993 (http://www.metransparent.com/texts/makkawi_interview_november.htm), Muhammad Makkawi stated that the group responsible for this assassination attempt was called al-Najun min al-Nar (“Saved from the Fire”). Saif may have been a member of this group. (The question of whether Saif is or is not Makkawi is controversial and involves much conflicting information.)

¹⁰³ Zargawi memoir. Saif would later and on numerous occasions criticize the senior al-Qa’ida leadership for the same faults; see al-Shafi’i, “al-Usuliyun yuhasisun,” and “Al-Adl Letter,” http://ctc.usma.edu/aq/Al%20Adl%20Letter_Translation.pdf.

¹⁰⁴ “al-Qa’id al-’askari al-jadid.” This is also said of Muhammad Makkawi, and it may be that this date and itinerary are true of the latter and *not* of Saif, who may very well have travelled to Pakistan in 1989 or ’90.

¹⁰⁵ *U.S. vs. Usama Bin Laden, et. al*, day 8, February 21, 2001, p. 1134

¹⁰⁶ *U.S. v. Usama Bin Laden et al.*, testimony of Jamal al-Fadl, day 2, February 6, 2001, pp. 244f.

the world,” and he directed Odeh to go to Somalia via Kenya.¹⁰⁷ This is a clear indication that Saif had attained a relatively high position within the organization by this time, and indeed Kherchtou testified that Saif was then already a member of al-Qa’ida’s military committee.¹⁰⁸ On January 20, 1993, along with seven other operatives, he was present at a meeting in the home of Abu Hafs to discuss a plan to establish training camps in Somalia and the Ogaden region of Ethiopia.¹⁰⁹ Sayf al-Islam al-Misri was given the task of leading the first team into Somalia, while Saif al-Adel remained in Pakistan; Sayf al-Islam left for Africa on February 4.¹¹⁰ Later that Spring Saif al-Adel journeyed there as well.

The first datable piece of evidence for placing Saif in Somalia is a letter by Abu’l-Walid addressed to him from Jihad Wal, dated 30 September 1993.¹¹¹ This letter mentions the fact that two prior letters from Saif in Somalia were received by Abu’l-Walid. The latter writes as Saif’s superior, refers to Saif as “young man,” and signs off “your uncle.” Abu’l-Walid, whose real name is Musatafa Hamid (مصطفى حامد), was joined to Saif by marriage at some point during the 1990s.¹¹² Abu’l-Walid opens his 1993 letter “greetings to you and to your dear family,” perhaps indicating that Saif’s wife and children¹¹³ had accompanied him to Africa. Abu’l-Walid’s letter alludes to the fact that Saif’s earlier letters had dealt with matters of a “military aspect,” including the observation that there was a shortage of weaponry and ammunition in the region at the time. Abu’l-Walid refers to the recent arrival of U.S. forces in Somalia and urges Saif to strike at the “bald eagle.”¹¹⁴

In a report dated 17 January 1994 and signed “Saif al-Adel,” Saif describes some of his operations in Somalia, recommends that al-Qa’ida purchase a launch in order to unload materiel from an awaited ship, discusses the feasibility of establishing an operational and training camp in the al-Hadidiyah forest, and comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the local Islamist leadership that his cell was working with in the

¹⁰⁷ *U.S. vs. Usama Bin Laden, et. al*, day 12, testimony of Special Agent John Anticev, pp. 1642f. Odeh went from Pakistan to Nairobi in March of ’93.

¹⁰⁸ *U.S. vs. Usama Bin Laden, et. al*, day 8, February 21, 2001, p. 1123.

¹⁰⁹ Sayf al-Islam, “The Ogaden file.” Also present at the meeting were Abu Qutayba al-Maghribi, Abu Jihad al-Nubi, Abu Yusuf al-Maghribi, Abu Thammam, Abu Islam al-Saghir and Abu Khalid al-Misri.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600053, the first of five letters to the Africa Corps.

¹¹² Shafi’i, “al-Zarqawi yukashif,” on the basis of information provided by Nu`man bin `Uthman, a Libyan Islamist and former jihadi based in London. See also al-Shafi’i, “al-Usuliyun yusahihun ma`lumat.”

¹¹³ In the Harmony document known as the “Al Adl Letter”

(http://ctc.usma.edu/aq/Al%20Adl%20Letter_Translation.pdf), probably by Saif though signed ‘Abd al-Halim al-`Adl and dated 13 June 2002, he refers to a private letter addressed to Abu’l-Walid in which he asks the latter to pass on “greetings and kisses to my children.” This letter was posted to the Internet in early 2002, but is no longer online. I was unable to locate a cached or archived copy of that letter at the time of writing, but according to the “Al Adl Letter” it included the names of Saif’s children.

¹¹⁴ Kherchtou’s testimony corroborates Saif’s presence in Somalia during this period; he testified that Saif was among those “from al-Qaeda who were working in Somalia and that were traveling through Nairobi,” and that it was Saif who informed the members of the cell in Kenya about the drowning of Abu Ubayda al-Banshiri in May of 1994 (*U.S. vs. Usama Bin Laden, et. al*, day 8, February 21, 2001, pp. 1173 and 1264-6).

area.¹¹⁵ In an undated letter written in the same period and signed “Omar al-Sumali, formerly known as Saif al-Adel,” he provides a detailed geographical and ethnographic description of the Nairobi-Kamboni route and of the southern region of Somalia, including the tribal structure, briefly describes six small-scale terrorist operations carried out in the area, and ultimately recommends that al-Qa’ida establish a lasting presence in the area.¹¹⁶ This letter also evidences some degree of friction between Saif and his addressee, inasmuch as he asks toward the end of the letter that his correspondent “not delay, as you usually do, in making the appropriate decisions” regarding his recommendation to establish an al-Qa’ida base in the area.

The next piece of evidence for Saif’s whereabouts puts him in the Gulf; Khalid Sheikh Muhammad claims to have met with Saif in Yemen in 1995.¹¹⁷ There is a letter from Saif to “Qari Saahib” dated 19 November 1997, asking for help in getting four people out of prison, but it does not mention where Saif is writing from.¹¹⁸ We next find him in South Asia, and he appears to have operated out of Afghanistan until the U.S.-led invasion in late 2001. Khalid Sheikh Muhammad admitted to having met with Saif and Muhammad Atef a number of times in Afghanistan in 1997 and ’98, “assisting them with computer and media projects.”¹¹⁹ In 1999, Saif worked as a trainer at the Mes Aynak training camp near Kabul, which had begun operations in the same year. Saif offered an advanced commando training course there.¹²⁰

It was also in 1999 that Saif began his—and al-Qa’ida’s—relationship with Abu Mus’ab al-Zarqawi (d. 6/7/2006). In his Zarqawi memoir Saif writes that he had learned about Zarqawi from articles by Abu Qatada al-Filistini in the latter’s London-based magazine *al-Minhaj*, and that he subsequently followed the news of the court case and imprisonment of Zarqawi and other Jordanian and Palestinian militants. Upon his release from Jordanian prison in 1999 Zarqawi moved to Peshawar, and soon thereafter travelled to Kandahar, Afghanistan to meet with al-Qa’ida officials. After meeting with Zarqawi and finding that he was a “hardliner” and in disagreement with certain aspects of al-Qa’ida’s ideology and practice, Saif asked Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri for the task of liaising with Zarqawi and overcoming their differences. The two al-Qa’ida chiefs appointed him to this task, and it was later agreed that al-Qa’ida would provide support for Zarqawi to establish an independent but al-Qa’ida-associated training camp in Herat, Afghanistan.¹²¹ This location was chosen because of its proximity to Iran, since it had become easier by that time for mujahidin to enter Afghanistan through Iran than

¹¹⁵ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600114.

¹¹⁶ Harmony, AFGP-2002-600113; though not dated, it is very probable that this was written prior to the letter dated 17 January 1994, since the latter assumes a commitment on al-Qa’ida’s part to set down stakes in the area, while in the former Saif recommends that they do so.

¹¹⁷ *9/11 Commission Report*, p. 489n. 9. Khalid disclosed neither the nature of their meeting nor whether he had any knowledge of Saif’s purpose in being in Yemen.

¹¹⁸ Or at least the English summary of the letter does not mention this; see p. 9 of Harmony, AFGP-2002-003677.

¹¹⁹ *9/11 Commission Report*, p. 149.

¹²⁰ *9/11 Commission Report*, p. 157.

¹²¹ It was at this camp that Zarqawi established his *Jund al-Sham*, a jihadi militia composed of people drawn from Jordan, Syria, and other central Arab lands traditionally know as al-Sham; this group was infiltrated by Jordanian intelligence and scattered before the U.S. invasion.

through Pakistan. Saif established connections with sympathetic parties in Iran and set up way stations in Tehran and Mashhad for mujahidin bound for Afghanistan. Saif made frequent trips from Kandahar to Herat to observe and assist with Zarqawi's operations. He also used these opportunities to deepen his contacts in Iran, though he says that these were with "virtuous people" in Iran and not with the Iranian government.¹²²

2000s: 9/11 and the Iranian Refuge(?)

According to the Australian Federal Police, Saif was involved in early 2000 in the development of a plot to assassinate Australian mining magnate and orthodox rabbi Joseph Gutnick.¹²³ As he notes in his Zarqawi memoir, Saif and the rest of the al-Qa'ida leadership were also engaged in planning the 9/11 operation throughout the final years of the '90s and during the beginning of the new millennium. The planning was not always a harmonious process, however. In July of 2001, after it became known to the al-Qa'ida leadership that Taliban leader Mullah Muhammad 'Umar was opposed to al-Qa'ida carrying out a direct attack on the United States, a split emerged between a number of the senior leaders. According to interrogations of several al-Qa'ida detainees, Saif was among those who agreed with Mullah 'Umar and opposed Bin Laden.¹²⁴ Abu'l-Walid was also opposed to Bin Laden in this matter, according to writings of his discovered by the U.S. military in Kandahar.¹²⁵

Following the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in October of 2001, Saif initially took a leading role in directing al-Qa'ida human resources in fighting the U.S. and Coalition forces. The Australian jihadi David Hicks—who was screened by Saif and Muhammad Atef in the Spring of 2001 before training at Tarnak Farms—reported to Saif in Kandahar in the immediate aftermath of the invasion and was directed to fight at the Kandahar Airport.¹²⁶ According to his Zarqawi memoir, it was soon decided that al-Qa'ida personnel should evacuate from Kandahar and go into hiding. While some of the leadership fled to the mountains on Afghanistan's eastern border, some went over the western border into Iran. Saif was in charge of this contingent, and he was assisted in Iran by members of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Islami.¹²⁷ Using money provided by supporters from the U.A.E., Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, Saif rented apartments in Iran for al-Qa'ida members and their families.

¹²² Saif al-Adel, Zarqawi memoir.

¹²³ Symons, "Brigitte link to Gutnick death plot."

¹²⁴ *9/11 Commission Report*, p. 251. He was apparently joined in this opposition by Abu Hafz the Mauritanian and Shaykh Sa'id al-Misri.

¹²⁵ Shafi'i, "Shaqiqa zawja."

¹²⁶ "Charge sheet: Allegations against Hicks." See also the U.S. press release regarding its case against Hicks (available here: <http://cryptome.quintessenz.org/mirror/usa-v-hicks.htm>), where it is stated that Saif "was assigning individuals to locations where they were to fight alongside other al Qaida associates against U.S. and Coalition forces."

¹²⁷ Saif al-Adel, Zarqawi memoir. Hekmatyar had gone into exile in Iran in 1996 and was there until the Iranian government shut down the offices of Hezb-i Islami and expelled him in February of 2002, around the same time that it began to arrest al-Qa'ida membership then in the country.

Soon thereafter Saif reestablished contact with the al-Qa'ida leadership in Afghanistan and began to organize groups of fighters to return there and support the insurgency. Zarqawi and his group of Palestinian and Jordanian jihadis—the remnants of his Jund al-Sham—planned to make their way to Iraq, where the Ansar al-Islam group had offered support.¹²⁸ In the first months of 2002, however, under pressure from the United States, the Iranian authorities began to detain some members of these groups, causing Saif to abort his activities and leading to the arrest of “up to 80 percent of Abu Mus'ab's group.”¹²⁹ Zarqawi managed to make his way to Iraq, and, writing in 2005, Saif stated that he had “not met Abu Mus'ab since he left Iran,” one of several indications that Saif remained in that country.

It is unclear whether Saif remains in Iran to this day, and if he is there, what his level of freedom of movement might be. In early 2003, Iran publicly admitted that it had numerous al-Qa'ida members, including members of the leadership, in custody, but it would not publicly name any of these people.¹³⁰ In May of 2003, when directly asked in an ABC News interview whether Iran was holding Saif, Iranian Ambassador to the United Nations Javad Zarif would neither confirm nor deny it, saying that Iran held more al-Qa'ida personnel in captivity than any other country and that because these people generally had multiple passports Iran was unable at the time to positively identify them.¹³¹ In early February 2007, however, a number of U.S. government officials, speaking on the condition that they not be identified, told a reporter at the Washington Post that American intelligence did know the precise identities of those held in Iranian custody, and that Iran had provided U.S. intelligence with their names, photographs and fingerprints before 2003.¹³² In early 2005 the German journalist Bruno Schirra claimed to have been shown by a Western intelligence service a list of the al-Qa'ida operatives held in Iran; the list included Saif.¹³³ According to a “former senior U.S. counterterrorism official,” Saudi intelligence detected communication in early 2003 between al-Qa'ida leaders in Iran and an al-Qa'ida cell in Saudi Arabia and, after demanding that Iran do something about this, Iranian authorities went on to detain 20 to 25 al-Qa'ida officials under house arrest.¹³⁴ It is said that they were detained at two locations, both guarded by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards: one in villas in the Namak Abrud region on the Caspian coast and the other in Lazivan, a region northwest of Tehran that houses a large military complex.¹³⁵ In February of 2007 a woman claiming to be the sister-in-law of Abu'l-Walid stated that her sister—Abu'l-Walid's wife—had recently

¹²⁸ The details of this account, as given by Saif in his Zarqawi memoir, are corroborated in 'Abd al-Rahim 'Ali, “al-Muqatilun al-'arab fi'l-'Iraq,” though in that article Saif is referred to as Colonel Makkawi.

¹²⁹ Saif al-Adel, Zarqawi memoir.

¹³⁰ La Guardia, “Iran holding ‘big time’ members of al-Qa'eda”; “Iran: We've got Qaeda Bigs.” In his letter to Zarqawi dated 9 July 2005, Ayman al-Zawahiri rhetorically asks: “do the brothers forget that we have more than one hundred prisoners - many of whom are from the leadership who are wanted in their countries - in the custody of the Iranians?”

¹³¹ “Ma bish az har keshvar-i digar al-qa'ida ra asyar kardim.” This is a Persian translation of the ABC interview, an English transcript of which does not appear to be available online.

¹³² Linzer, “Al-Qaeda Suspects.”

¹³³ Schirra, “Wie gefährlich ist Iran?”

¹³⁴ Windrem, “Al-Qaida reportedly finds safe haven in Iran.”

¹³⁵ Ibid.

telephoned her from Tehran and told her that Abu'l-Walid's family, Saif and others were under house arrest there, in the custody of the Revolutionary Guards.¹³⁶

Whatever his whereabouts, Saif did not cease his al-Qa'ida activities during this period. It is believed that in April of 2002 Sa'd bin Laden, who was part of the al-Qa'ida contingent in Iran led by Saif at the time, organized from inside Iran the truck bombing of a synagogue in Djerba, Tunisia.¹³⁷ In June of 2002, Saif apparently wrote a letter to "brother Mukhtar" under the name 'Abd al-Halim 'Adl, in which he bemoans the losses that al-Qa'ida had incurred since the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, expresses strong disapproval of Osama bin Laden and his leadership, and mentions a private letter which he'd tried to send to Abu'l-Walid but which was instead posted on a jihadi web forum.¹³⁸ The contents of the letter make clear that Saif was still very much involved in the day-to-day operational affairs of the organization at that time. In 2003, according to Saudi and U.S. intelligence, Saif was in communication with the al-Qa'ida cell in Riyadh that carried out the bombings of the Dorrat al-Jadawel compound in Riyadh on May 12 of that year.¹³⁹ During the same spring Saif was in touch with the Arabic-language newspaper al-Sharq al-Awsat, telling them that he believed that around 350 "Afghan Arabs" had been killed in Afghanistan since the U.S. invasion, and that around 180 of them had been captured.¹⁴⁰ December of 2003 saw the inception of "Mu'askar al-Battar," a jihadi magazine published under the auspices of al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula; in every issue Saif contributed an article in the section "al-Amn wa'l-istikhbarat" ("Security and Intelligence Operations").¹⁴¹ In 2004 a diary of Saif's was recovered during a raid in Saudi Arabia.¹⁴² He was last heard from in 2005, when he contributed the already-cited memoir on Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi upon the solicitation of the journalist Fu'ad Husayn.

¹³⁶ al-Shafi'i, "Shaqiqa zawja."

¹³⁷ Windrem, "Al-Qaida reportedly finds safe haven in Iran."

¹³⁸ "Al-Adl Letter," http://www.ctc.usma.edu/aq/AI%20Adl%20Letter_Translation.pdf. Apparently Saif's children were with Abu'l-Walid at that time, since he asked in the letter that Abu'l-Walid pass along his affectionate greetings to them. The letter was posted to alneda.com, though I have as of yet not been able to locate it on the Internet Archive (www.archive.org).

¹³⁹ Sherwell, "Teheran 'providing refuge'"; according to un-named U.S. intelligence officials cited in Linzer, "Al-Qaeda Suspects," "there are suspicions, but no proof" that such communication took place.

¹⁴⁰ "Al-mas'ul al-'askari li'l-qa'ida."

¹⁴¹ Available at various internet sites; what looks like a complete run of the journal can be found here: <http://www.qa3edoon.com/BattarFullWEB/contents.htm>. Some analysis of Saif's writings in "Mu'askar al-Battar" can be found in Ulph, "Al-Qaeda's Online Publications" and Scheuer, "Assessing London and Sharm al-Sheikh."

¹⁴² "Verbatim Transcript," p. 4.

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V. Lesser Members/Affiliates of al-Qa'ida

A. Aden Hashi Farah Ayro

Ayro, a member of the Ayr clan and thought to be 29 or 30 years of age, is one of the most violent Salafi militia leaders and a protégé of Aweys. His extremism seems similar to that of the late al-Qa'ida leader Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, in that he alienated his fellow clansmen by the specter of violence he created. He also lacks serious religious credentials and, which combined with his youth, make it unlikely for him to inherit the leadership of a major Salafi organization in Somalia.

Ayro was appointed by Aweys to head the Hizb al-Shabab, or youth wing of the Islamic Courts Union, and is also the leader of other militias, although it is not entirely clear what groups he heads within Somalia or what their political agendas are. His group has been linked to the killings of four foreign aid workers and a dozen or more Somalis who had been working with Westerners. He received military training in Afghanistan prior to the U.S.-led invasion and has ties to al-Qa'ida operatives Abu Talha al-Sudani and Ahmed Abdi Godane. He was also among the Somali delegation of mujahidin that traveled to Lebanon in July 2006 to fight Israeli forces.

B. Gouled Hasan Dourad

Dourad was born in Somalia in 1974 and is currently detained by the United States in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. He lived in refugee camps in Germany following civil war in Somalia and eventually received asylum from Sweden. According to the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Gouled was the head of a division of al-Ittihad al-Islami (AIAI) that supported al-Qa'ida members in Somalia, working for the leader of al-Qa'ida's East African cell, Abu Talha al-Sudani. In this capacity, he procured safe houses and weapons for al-Qa'ida militants, and did reconnaissance for a proposed suicide attack on the U.S. base Camp Lemonier in Djibouti.

The imam of his mosque in Sweden put him and an associate in touch with individuals who sent him to Afghanistan, where he trained in explosives and weaponry at al-Qa'ida's Khaldan camp. He returned to Somalia in 1996 and joined the fighting against Ethiopians in Ogaden, working with both AIAI and al-Qa'ida members. He continued these activities as al-Ittihad was becoming defunct, although its leaders remained active and attempted to continue operations.

C. Abu Talha al-Sudani (Tariq `Abd Allah)

Abu Talha is an al-Qa'ida operative with extensive explosives training, and alleged to be close to bin Laden. He was born in Sudan and married a Somali woman, and they resided in Somalia beginning in 1993. He is also an associate of Gouled Hasan Dourad, working with the Mogadishu cell of AIAI that was responsible for supporting al-Qa'ida members.

He, along with Fazul and Salih `Ali Salih Nabhan were the targets of the American air strikes on Somalia in January 2007. According to the testimony of Jamal al-Fadl, he received explosives training from Hizbollah in southern Lebanon in the early 1990s. He is believed to have assisted Fazul in the car bombing and attempted attack on the Israeli airliner in Kenya in 2002.

Following the 1998 embassy bombings, a number of the East African cell members involved in the attack were arrested. The remaining members at large, including Fazul, were assisted financially by Abu Talha, who was traveling frequently between Somalia and the United Arab Emirates at the time.

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APPENDIX C

NOTES AND INTERVIEWS FROM KENYA

- I. Notes on Ras Kiamboni**
- II. Sample of Kenyan Views**
- III. Confession of Omar Said Omar**
- IV. Written Statement of Mombasa Muslim Leaders**

APPENDIX C-I:

NOTES ON RAS KIAMBONI:¹

THE ‘ALI-ITIHAD MILITARY BASE AND TRAINING CAMP’

Part I: Mr. A. A., Local Fisherman/Seafood Businessman

Introduction

On 28 September I had a conversation with Mr. A. A., a member of Kenya’s Orma community from Tana River District in Coast Province. He claims to have direct and indirect information on an “Islamic terrorist training base-camp” located at Ras Kiamboni, a coastal town some 10-20 kms. north of Kiunga at the Kenya-Somalia border. He did not offer the name of their organization, but other sources suggest this settlement-facility belongs to Ali-Itihad.²

A. A. served for about 12 years in the Kenya Army (he showed me his discharge document) and for the last several years he has operated a fish buying and selling business between the north Kenya coast and Malindi/Mombasa, buying fish, crabs, prawns and lobster from local fishermen. He has also just registered the North Coast Construction Limited, a company he intends to use to try and get public works construction contracts, mainly in his native Tana River District. (He showed me the registration certificate.)

The following notes are taken from this conversation, translated from Swahili.

Ras Kiamboni: The Location and Fishing Business

Ras Kiamboni is a small town, larger than Garsen, but much smaller than Lamu Town. During the rule of Said Barre, it had its own district commissioner/governor.

By motorized fishing boat, it is about 30 minutes north of the border at Kiunga, where there is also a Kenya Customs post.

Various tribes are found in the surrounding coastal and interior areas, on both sides of the border. These are: Galjel Somali, Bajuni, Pate, Boni and some Orma; the latter two groups engage mainly in livestock grazing. Most of the fishing is done by the Bajuni, many of whom are Kenyan. They tend to prefer to fish north of the border, and especially opposite the inland creek just above Ras Kiamboni that is fed by some fresh water, for two reasons: this combination of water is ideal for prawns and there are more fish and lobster in this area in general, and because catch from across the border is not subject to Kenya Fisheries’ taxation.

¹ This spelling is based on the informant’s pronunciation; the author is aware of alternative spellings, especially ‘Kambooni’ (seen in the Project Harmony translated al-Qa’ida documents).

² For an alternative view regarding this group’s possible linkages to international terrorism, see Dowden (2002).

A. A. has therefore been active in this area for some time; he has a residence (rented?) in Lamu Town as well as in Bura in Tana River. He hires a boat or boats to fish, and/or buys directly from local fishermen. He was last in this area in January of this year.

Arrival of Newcomers and the Establishment of the Training Camp/Base

At that time he went as far as Ras Kiamboni where he has been going for this purpose for some time. From 1996, he noticed and was told about new, strange people who had recently arrived from unknown places. According to his fishermen contacts and own observations, they were not locals, but rather, Arabs and other more “European-looking type people” but who were Muslims. On this occasion, he was told there were only about 30 of these new-comers.

Over the last few years, their presence has increased, and he has continued to hear stories about them, including how they have completely taken over the area, especially since the departure of General Morgan (Barre’s in-law) from the Kismayu area farther north and who then passed into Kenya via Ras Kiamboni itself; he later returned to Kismayu before being driven out again, supposedly into Ethiopia. It appears his forced eviction reflected the desire of these newcomers to have no rival authority in the area, and apparently none has existed since that time.

Their numbers now appear to include Indonesians and other “Asian-looking people” as well as Arabs. From their arrival, they are said to have recruited a number of local Somali male youth to help them in language translation and menial tasks. They also built an impressive religious education center (*madrassa*) where these youth are being sent. Here they receive instruction in a particularly harsh and puritanical form of Islam; these teachings, and the changed resultant behavior, is said to have completely cut them off from their own families. According to locals, these newcomers are their “new parents.” Even local women who have been taken as wives are said to have broken off with their natal families. For example, it is claimed that the locals do not correctly follow Islamic slaughtering ritual, so that eating local food with local people who have prepared such food is ‘*haramu*’, or unclean. Such social exclusiveness has caused both resentment and fear among the local population.

This version of Islam is not imposed only on those closely associated with the newcomers, however. Local people who have been warned to stop smoking or chewing *miraa* and have then been found to continue to doing this have been summarily executed, “even later on the same day; you are given no time to change your way of life.”³ In A. A.’s view, what they have imposed is not Islam, but “a form of devil-rule.”

In addition to the Islamic education center, there is also a military camp that appears to be the main residential area for these newcomers; it is about a five minute walk from Ras Kiamboni town center and about ten minutes from the sea front. During

³ A Somali businessman who had “taken refuge” in Nairobi later described how much of the local support that does exist for more ascetic versions of Islam stemmed originally from the reaction to the attempts to impose ‘European culture’ as part of the country’s adoption of ‘socialist’ following the 1968 coup. Especially important here were efforts to elevate the status of women that “violated our Somali culture.”

1996-97, the main structures there were cloth tents, but over the last several years, permanent (cement) structures have been erected. There is also a large footpath leading from this camp into the Boni Forest. It is said there are additional facilities there, but A. A. is unaware of what these might be. He has seen only three Land-Cruiser vehicles, but does not rule out the presence of others, especially in the thick forest area. He has not seen aircraft there, but they have many boats, including motorized sea-bikes that they use to move quickly from the shore to larger vessels off-shore.

During his last visit, in January of this year, he saw about 200 of them jogging on the beach with rifles, what he perceived to be AK-47s. This was quite obviously military drilling. This group was comprised mainly of (non-local) Arabs, Indian-looking people, some Somali, and even one European.

Another reason for local resentment is the control they have imposed over the local fishing business. In 1997, while A. A. was in Kiunga, his hired boat and crew were apprehended by one of their sea-patrols. He was informed about this and had to pay \$800 to have them released. (This figure was based on the size of the catch; A. A. changed Kenya currency in Kiunga to get this money. He says there is a great deal of money-changing in this border area; I did not ask him what the rate was/is.) Payment is by the weight of the catch. Records are kept, so that if a boat leaves with catch that cannot be paid for, the boat is seized whenever it comes back if its crew does not make the required payment at that time. According to A. A., if payment is not made, "the boat owner could even be shot."

On certain days, fishing is prohibited altogether; crews are told to just stay away from the area.

At the same time, it seems those in the camp are extremely well-financed from external sources, since they send personnel to Kiunga and Lamu to buy provisions in great quantities. Some of these people have been seen with Kenya identity cards and even passports; though it is clear to locals they cannot be Kenyans.

According to local informants, Ras Kiamboni is the "central base" for operations covering a much wider area of Somalia. They are said to have other camps/bases in Gedo, Bardere, Luk, Bula-Hawa, and another across the Kenya border at Mandera. It is also said they have presence in El-Wak, Mogadishu and in northern Puntland (near the border with Yemen), where tribal leader Abdulahi Yusuf accommodates them for payment.

Before the 1998 US Embassy bombing in Nairobi, some Lamu residents had come to know the Arab who had married locally and started a fish business, eventually obtaining a contract to supply the Grand Regency Hotel in Nairobi. He also sold provisions directly to the Ras Kiamboni base.

Conclusion

Mr. A. A. expressed great concern about the presence of this facility and community. This seemed to reflect both annoyance with the interference in access to preferred fishing grounds and the very ascetic/harsh form of Islam that has been imposed, and

to Kenya's - and the wider world's - security. Several times he referred to the US Embassy bombing and the recent terrorist attack in the US. He is convinced people connected to this group/settlement are involved whether directly or indirectly. He also expressed frustration that Kenyan security around the Kiunga border area seems to be so lax and porous: "The Kenya Police take no notice of them; when we complain or try to get their interest, they say that is not their concern since it is all outside Kenya." He is not aware of any particular interest that has been taken either by the local District Administration or by the KANU political leadership in Lamu District over this presence.

Part II: Report from a British Journalist

Introduction

I had a separate conversation with A. B., a reporter for UK newspaper. He had spoken with a European source at the UN offices in Nairobi, following the evacuation of their food-relief program in the southern Somalia area which took place after the attack in the US. The following summary contains some of the information he obtained.

Ras Kiamboni and Ali-Jihad

The UN has had to evacuate its food-relief work from southern Somalia. At least two people of European origin have been killed in this area since 1995. Recently the UN mission was told no "white face" will be tolerated there again.

The UN received reports that an Ali-Jihad base had been established at Ras Kiamboni, but that Osama bin Laden has also been seen there, along with "many Afghans and Pakistanis." Al-Qaeda is also said to have bases in various parts of Somalia, including Mogadishu, where two of bin Laden's sons are said to be currently living. They also have a center in Puntland.

In several big towns in Somalia where Ali-Jihad is active they are active in the transport, banking and mobile phone businesses.

The UN source denied the allegation that some 500 local Somali staff had been infiltrated by Al-Qaeda.

Part III: Comment from a Lamu Tour Operator/Local Kanu Official

Introduction

I spoke with O. F., an old friend from Lamu who runs a tourist business and is also a local KANU branch official. His family's original home is the Kiunga area; they were displaced by the Shifta attacks about 40 years ago.

Insecurity and Fears

O. F. attends District Development Committee meetings and has urged for increased security along the Kiunga border, both to combat general outlaw-robbery and to

prevent incursions from “this camp” that many people have heard stories about across the border. Given the absence of any recognizable authority in Somalia, he feels this should be a priority. However, government officials have yet to show any perceptible interest in these matters.

He fears that due to the high dependence of the Lamu economy on tourism, its people – whether seen collectively or as individuals – might be targeted by anti-Western/radical Islamic elements who view such close relations with non-Muslims as anathema. Only one such attack could kill the local tourist industry for ever, he feels.

He claimed not to have any direct knowledge of the Ras Kiamboni base-camp. However, due to his family ties and business relations with numerous local fishermen, he offered to find out what he could.

APPENDIX C-II:

A SMALL, UNREPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF MUSLIM VIEWS

I served my constituents for fifteen years, many of them Muslim. And I've lived in Mombasa since my school days, so I know these people very well. They are very good people, and they voted for me, even more than for Muslim candidates.

But there is one thing about them that is very bad. If I, as a Christian, commit a crime, even my friends who are Christians will say I did wrong, because what I did was criminal. But with Muslims, they will say: "What he did doesn't matter, because he is a fellow Muslim."

That is why terrorists can operate in Mombasa. I don't believe any Kenyan Muslim could do such thing; but they can know who these people are, and keep quiet, even if they don't support what they want to do, and some of them do support it [Interview, Former (non-Muslim) Member of Parliament from Mombasa; Nairobi, 13/02/07].

While it was not possible to conduct an actual survey to explore the distribution of particular attitudes¹, it was possible to interview a small number of Muslims (all either living at the Coast or having done so for a considerable period in the past) and to ask them how they thought members of their population (and specifically *not* themselves in terms of their own, personal views), selected randomly, would answer questions that explore them "if all those interviewed were being completely honest."

This Appendix includes results obtained from seven such individuals, although not all questions were asked in each case. These are presented below, together with a brief description of the individual, without (as promised prior to the interview) revealing his/her identity. Without exception, however, those chosen for interviews are long-standing friends of the author, so that their candid cooperation was assumed, and was almost entirely forthcoming. Due to individual sensitivities to the topic, not every interviewee was asked every question.

Note, also, that since particular questions were dropped and added in the course of arranging and conducting these interviews, not all questions have the same number of responses. Finally, even some questions that were retained in the questionnaire were not asked in every case, depending upon their perceived level

¹ Predictable self-defensive hostility resulted from the discovery (through one of the field-interviewers) in May, 2006, that a survey was being designed (on behalf of an anonymous client) of Muslims at the Coast regarding a number of public issues, as well as their views towards and level of engagement in various religious practices. After a draft questionnaire reached the CIPK (i.e., the Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya), a front-page announcement-article appeared in a local weekly Muslim newsletter issue warning Muslims not to participate in the survey, as it was clearly "part of a campaign to fight Muslims," probably instigated by "foreign forces" (*The Friday Bulletin: The Muslim News Update*, 2006: 1-2).

of sensitivity for the particular respondent, and how much time there was for the interview.

Interview Introduction

“Thank you for helping me. Of course, it will not be possible to conduct a survey with these questions, but let us suppose it were possible to pose them to Kenya’s adult Muslim population, or at least those living in and around Mombasa (and perhaps also in North Eastern Province). If people answered honestly, what percent do you think would agree (“Yes”), disagree (“No”), or would not be sure (“Don’t know”) to each one?”

Brief Comment

As pointed out above, the small size of this ‘sample’ has not allowed for a more reliable set of ranges in terms of the responses to particular questions. Likewise, individual responses are likely to have been somewhat affected by the particular relationship each respondent has with the author.

Notwithstanding these severe limitations, several fundamental facts are evident. Among them, one is the universal agreement that Muslims in Kenya are denied the rights and respect they feel they deserve. Looking elsewhere, there is a marked pessimism about the prospects for peace in the Middle East, as long as Israel continues to exist.

Turning specifically to terrorism, acceptance of the involvement of Kenyans is seen as minimal. At the same time, however, there is little faith that were local Muslims to become aware of terrorist activity they would report this to the authorities. Finally, there appears to be some belief amongst Kenyans that Muslims might participate in a terrorist attack.

At the same time, there was widespread agreement that the history of terrorism in Kenya has affected fellow Muslims for the worse; a striking lack of agreement was evident, however, in terms of the likelihood of future attacks.

Altogether, and again keeping in mind the very ‘unscientific’ nature of this exercise, the results do highlight key issues relevant to this study, and should at least provoke further consideration of them as well as future areas of research.

<i>Respondent</i>	1 Former Member of Parliament (Coast Kenya)			2 Nairobi-based Senior Islamic NGO Official			3 Nairobi-based Senior Islamic NGO Official			4 Woman Professional- NE Province			5 Nairobi-based Professional Woman			6 Present Member of Parliament, Coast			7 Civic Representative, Coast Province		
<i>Question:</i>	Yes	No	?	Yes	No	?	Yes	No	?	Yes	No	?	Yes	No	?	Yes	No	?	Yes	No	?
Do you approve of America's foreign policy towards Muslims?	5	90	5							8	90	2	5	94	1	0	50	0	0	90	10
Do you think Israel has a right to exist, even within its pre-1967 borders?	30	40	30	20	20	60				10	85	5	40	45	15				60	20	20
Do you think Kenya is safer with US military forces here?	0	95	5	0	80	20	20	80	0	20	60	20	40	50	10	30	70	0	5	90	5
Do you think Muslims in Kenya are given the respect and rights they deserve from other Kenyans and from the Kenya government?	15	80	5	0	100	0	5	95	0	15	80	5	30	60	10	20	80	0	20	70	10
Do you think those Muslim terrorists who have operated in Kenya have had at least some local Kenyan Muslims?	15	60	25	20	65	15				5	95	0	30	60	10				0	99	1
If you came to know anyone planning a terrorist attack in the name of Islam, would you report this to the Police?	20	70	10	10	35	55	25	75	0				35	55	10						
Would you be willing to participate in a terrorist attack against US, UK or Israeli interests in Kenya, even if you knew doing so might cost you your life?	25	55	20	70	5	25							65	25	10						
Would you be willing to participate in such an attack if you could be certain that only the people you had targeted would die?				99	1	0							80	20	0						
Would you be willing to participate in such an attack against US, UK or Israeli facilities, interests and/or personnel in Kenya as long as doing so would not put your own life in danger?	25	55	20										50	50	0						
Do you think it is likely that there will be another terrorist attack against the US or its allies and/or the Kenya government within the next 1-2 years?													65	25	10	10	90	0	15	85	0

<u>Respondent</u>	1			2			3			4			5			6			7		
	Former Member of Parliament (Muslim, Coast			Nairobi-based Senior Islamic NGO Official			Nairobi-based Senior Islamic NGO Official			Woman Professional-NE Province			Nairobi-based Professional Woman			Present Member of Parliament, Coast			Civic Representative, Coast Province		
<u>Question:</u>	Yes	No	?	Yes	No	?	Yes	No	?	Yes	No	?	Yes	No	?	Yes	No	?	Yes	No	?
For the next two ?'s	%			%			%			%			%			%			%		
Do you think the main interest of the US in its “war against terrorism” is to:																					
<i>Weaken Islam</i>							85			75			60			80			20		
<i>Gain economic benefits</i>							15			0			10			20		20	70		
<i>defend itself against future attacks</i>							0			10			30						5		
<i>not sure</i>							0			15			0						5		
Do you think the attacks that have occurred in Kenya have made the overall position of Muslims in Kenya:																					
<i>better</i>										0			20			30			10		
<i>worse</i>										100			80			70			70		
<i>about the same</i>										0			0			0			20		

APPENDIX C-III:

THE (DISALLOWED) CONFESSION OF OMAR SAID OMAR¹

Anyone who followed the case and heard the evidence in court could see that (Omar Said) Omar was involved; it was just because of bungling, starting from the evidence-gathering, that they couldn't make the connection between what was found in his house and the hotel bombing [Confidential Interview, Western diplomatic official, Nairobi, 24 February, 2007].

It was clear these people were innocent, or at least that the government had no convincing evidence. Even the weapons used to convict Omar appeared to have been planted by the Police, since they were only discovered after he was taken into custody.

It seems they wanted to please the Americans and the Israelis by showing that at least they could convict somebody.

These were not educated people. No evidence was presented that they held any particular or religious views, let alone that they had spent any time outside Kenya. So as far as I can tell, no Kenyans have really been shown to have participated in any terrorist attacks here [Confidential Interview, local stringer for an international news agency who covered the trial of the suspects charged over the Coast attacks of 2002, Nairobi, 18 February, 2007].

As noted in the main text, new rules of evidence made the following statement inadmissible in court. Omar Said Omar was initially arrested for his involvement in the twin al-Qa'ida attacks of 28 November 2002 on the Paradise Hotel in Kikambala, Kenya and an Israeli airliner departing from Moi International Airport in Mombasa, Kenya. Omar was later cleared of all charges pertaining to his alleged involvement in these attacks. This inadmissible confession reiterates how al-Qa'ida operates in Kenya. Their activities in the recently declassified Harmony documents were remarkably similar to their operations along the coast of Kenya in 2002 and 2003.

¹ This document was made available to journalists (who sought it from the Court Clerk) after it was submitted, but before the judge had ruled on its admissibility.

STATEMENT UNDER INQUIRY OF OMAR SAID OMAR

I John Mulalulu a Superintendent of Police and attached to Anti-Terrorism Police Unit Nairobi, I am inquiring into an alleged offence of murder contrary to section 203 as read with Section 204 of Penal Code.

That on the 28th day of November, 2002 at Paradise Hotel Kikambala in the Kilifi District of the Coast Province you OMAR SAID OMAR, SWALEH NABHAN, FAZUL MOHAMED alias ABDULKARIM, ABDULMALIK and others bombed Paradise Hotel using a Pajero car and as a result 15 people were killed. The said person also attempted to shoot down an ISRAEL - ARKAI aircraft near Moi Airport of Mombasa.

I do believe that you OMAR SAID OMAR are directly connected with the offence.

Do you wish to say anything in answer to the allegation?

I caution you that you are not obliged to say anything unless you wish to do so but whatever you say will be taken down in writing and may be given in evidence.

D.C.

signed.

Having understood the nature of the alleged offence the subject states the following:-

OMAR SAID OMAR
C/O BOX 84996
MOMBASA

I/D NO.10579669

OTHER DETAILS

DISTRICT	-	MOMBASA ISLAND
LOC.	-	MAJENGO
SUB-LOC	-	MSAJI
RESIDENCE	-	MAJENGO SOKONI

STATES IN ENGLISH

That I am the above named person aged 32 years. I was born in Mombasa in Guraya Area. I am the son of SAID OMAR SAID and UMURUMAN UTHEFA MOHAMED. My father died in 1976 and my mother is alive and lives in Kingorani. In my father's family we are only two I and my sister SOFIA SIAD OMAR who is married to KHAMIS MOHAMED.

In the year 1977 I joined Mtongwe Nursery School. In the same year I was taken by my uncle AWADHI OMAR SAID MKUNUBI in lamu. I joined Mukunubi Primary School until 1983 when I was again taken by my aunt NURU OMAR SAID to Mombasa and was enrolled to standard 4 in Mvita Primary School. I finished Standard 8 in 1987.

In 1988 I joined Sacred Heart Secondary School in Mombasa. I completed form 4 in 1991 and got grade of C-.

In the whole of 1992 I stayed in Mombasa doing nothing. In 1993 I enrolled myself at the Binary Computer Institute which I completed in the same year. In the Institute I learned Lotus 1,2 and 3, D-Base, Word Perfect and accounting packages.

After completing my Computer course in the same year I joined Mombasa Coffee Limited as casual Labourer until January 1994. In the same year I left Coffee Limited and was employed by Doshi Ceramic Limited as a Computer operator where I worked until August the same year.

Before August 1994 I stayed without a job. In October the same year I was employed at AL-NASSIR Hotel in Magongo as a cashier. I worked there until January 1996. Between January and August 1996 I again stayed without a job. In August 1996 I once again went back to Al-Nassir Hotel also as a cashier.

In 1996 I can also remember that I traveled to Eldoret to visit my friend HASSAN SAID OMAR who was in Moi University. While in Eldoret in October 1996 I was introduced to SULEIMAN who was a businessman by my friend HASSAN SAID OMAR.

In 1998 I met a friend of mine by the name ISSA OSMAN ISSA and he told me that he had relatives in Somalia. In 1999 I traveled to Lamu and from Lamu I went to MDOA IN southern Somalia. When I was leaving Kenya I had about Kshs.15,000/-.

On arrival at MDOA I found ISSA OSMAN ISSA. ISSA OSMAN ISSA told me to accompany him to Kisimayu to start a business of selling Lobster fish.

We started the business of selling Lobster fish with a capital of Ksh.60,000/-. In the business we were ISSA OSMAN ISSA, ABDULMALIK and ISSA TANZANIA whose real name was SULEIMAN.

We did the business until January 2000 when we moved to BUURGAO in Somalia. While in Buurgao ISSA OSMAN ISSA moved to MOGADISHU. ISSA TANZANIA followed and later ABDULMALIK followed them in April. I was left in BUURGAO and stayed there until November 2001 when I sold everything I had then I went to Mogadishu to join my comrades, ISSA OSMAN ISSA, ABDULMALIK, ISSA TANZANIA and other men I was introduced to by the names ABDULKARIM AND ABDULHAMAN ISSA OSMAN told me that ABDULHAMAN was the man in charge of financial control. I was also introduced to ABDULKARIM and I was told that he comes from U.S.A.

When we were in Kismayu that is the time when ISSA OSMAN ISSA talked to me about JIHAD (HOLY WAR). He told me that for somebody to join Jihad he should be physically fit and should be conversant with handling of firearms.

I listened to what ISSA OSMAN ISSA and I tried to learn from them. While still in Mogadishu ISSA OSMAN ISSA introduced me to weapon training.

I also remember that while we were in Somalia there was no established training camps but we used to be trained in the house where we were living. I was being trained alone because the rest had already undergone the same training. During the time of my training there were no other Kenyans. My instructors were other members of the group who had already received their military training.

ABDULHAMAN and ISSA OSMAN ISSA had offered to take me for further training in Afghanistan which I did not go because by that time the Americans had already invaded Afghanistan which I did not go because by that time the Americans had already invaded Afghanistan.

It was told by ISSA OSMAN ISSA. That the aim of the terrorist group was to fight all Americans, British, Israelites and Australians. While in Mogadishu every member of the team had a Pistol. There were also 3AK47 rifles and 8 hand grenades.

In December, 2001 I decided to get married. By then I had fetched US\$900 from the business I was doing of selling lobster.

When I told my comrades that I wanted to go back to Kenya they added me US\$400 and in total I had US\$1300.

From Mogadishu I traveled by an aeroplane upto Wilson Airport Nairobi. I had no passport by that time so I used a fake

Ethiopian passport which was taken by agents who deal with fake passports at the airport.

From Wilson Airport I went to Eastleigh 8th street where I booked a lodging at Burwako Lodge which is near the mosque.

I stayed in Nairobi for 2 days then I traveled to Mombasa on board Bussclass. Between January and February, 2002 I rented an apartment in Ganjoni area near micro garage. I stayed in the house alone and later ISSA OSMAN ISSA joined me.

Before ISSA OSMAN ISSA had left Somalia he had communicated to me through H.F. Radio that was in AL NASSIR HOTEL in Bondeni area. This by the name ISSA KOMBO ISSA. I had collected the ID Card at the GPO Mombasa and changed the picture.

I burnt the fake ID Card which was bearing the name ISSA KOMBO ISSA when I was staying in Tudor.

In Ganjoni house ISSA OSMAN ISSA had a wife by the name HALIMA who he had married in Kisumu in March or April, 2002. In the same house there was also a wife of FUMO MOHAMED FUMO by the name SAUDA. The landlady for the Ganjoni house was FAIZA. I paid Kshs.10,000/= for the Ganjoni house.

I stayed with ISSA OSMAN in the Ganjoni house for one month then I left and rented another house in Nyali. I paid Kshs.12,000/= for the house. I took my comrades ISSA

OSMAN ISSA and SAMIR SALIM and introduced them to the Land ford of the Nyali house.

By that time ISSA OSMAN ISSA was using a vehicle belonging to SWALEH NAHBAN a white Toyota corolla salon, which I do not know the registration number. LAt Nyali house ISSA OSMAN ISSA was living with his wife HALIMA. SAMIR SALIM was also staying with his wife whose name I do not remember.

The landlord for Nyali house is by the name DESOUSA (GOA by tribe). The landlord stays in Tudor. In April, 202 I left Mombasa for Lamu where I stayed for 3 days then took a boat and traveled to Kismayu. The boat I used was MR. MIDRARAH, which I do not know the owner.

When I arrived in Kismayu I stayed in a hotel known as MEDINA. In Kismayu I was doing the business of buying and selling sea products. I stayed in Kismayu for 3 months.

While in Kismayu I was visited by ISSA TANZANIA and ABDULMALIK. This is when we talked about the operation which was to take place in Mombasa.

I did not know the time and place of the operation but I knew that there was place which was to be bombed.

Already the surveillance of the target had been done by ISSA OSMAN ISSA, SALIM SAMIR, FUMO MOHAMED FUMO, SWALEH NAHBAN and HARUN BAMUSA (ALIAS SAID). ISSA TANZANIA

and ABDULMALIK also told me to prepare myself because the operation was to take place very soon.

I also recall while still at Kismaiyu my comrades ISSA TANZANIA and ABDULLMALIK told me to buy a cell phone and give the telephone number to ISSA OSMAN ISSA who was in Mombasa. ABDULMALIK gave me US\$300 to buy the cell phone.

In August, 2002 I returned to Mombasa through Lamu using a boat. When I arrived in Mombasa I went and stayed with SWALEH NAHBAN and FUMO HOHAMED FUMO in Tudor area. SWALEH NAHBAN and FUMO MOHAMED FUMO were also staying with their wives in the house. The wife of SWALEH NAHBAN was by the name SAUDA. The house at Tudor was rented by ISSA OSMAN ISSA. The house was rented at Kshs.20,000/= I stayed in this house until October, when I shifted to Majengo Mombasa.

In the same month of October, I bought a cell phone and a Sim card and also a credit card of 250/=. The cell phone number was 0722 403612. When I purchased the cell phone I gave the number to ISSA OSMAN ISSA as earlier agreed.

Between the month of August and October we frequently met with ISSA OSMAN ISSA at Mombasa Polytechnic mosque. In September, I also remember I met ABDULKARIM (FAZUL) in that mosque. One time ABDULKARIM (FAZUL) asked me about the help they had requested me for. I told him that I am available and ready when needed.

ABDULKARIM (FAZUL) told m to go to Lamu to see if I can get a boat, which can be ready available when needed. He ABDULKARIM (FAZUL) also reminded me that there is something concerning HIHAD meaning terrorist act and it is going to happen within the Coastal region.

On 20th November, 2002 ISSA OSMAN ISSA gave me Kshs. 20,000/= while we were in the mosque for hiring an escape boat. ISSA OSMAN ISSA told me that I must keep my cell phone always open.

On 21st November, 2002 I left and went to Lamu. In Lamu I also rented a house for Ksh,6,00/= . This house was to be used by all of us when escaping to Somalia.

I did not rent the boat because I found out that there was a boat which was to leave Lamu to Somalia between 28th,29th and 30th of November, 2002 on normal business and it could accommodate us all.

I did not use the Kshs20,000/= which ISSA OSMAN ISSA had given me. The Ksh.6,000/= which I used for renting the house at Lamu was given to me by ISSA OSMAN ISSA. From Lamu I went back to Mombasa and informed ISSA OSMAN ISSA on who arrangements I had done. ISSA OSMAN ISSA told me that I should leave earlier to Lamu to wait for them and make arrangement for the escape boat. ISSA OSMAN ISSA told me that the operation was ready and I should not talk to anybody about it.

On 26th November 2002 I went to Lamu and on that day I slept in a lodging known as Marus lodge and the following day 27th November, 2002 I shifted to the house which I had rented for Kshs,6,000/=earlier. I also checked about escape boat and found it was ready.

On 27th November, 2002 I communicated with ISSA OSMAN ISSA through my cell phone and confirmed that the escape boat was ready.

On 28th November, 2002 at around 10.00am ISSA OSMAN ISSA called me on cell phone and told me that the operation was over and I should stay prepared because they were coming. They did not come that day.

On 29th November 2002 ISSA OSMAN ISSA, SWALEH NAHBAN and ABDULMALIK came to Lamu.

The whole operation was done by ISSA OSMAN ISSA, SWALEH NAHBAN, ABDULMALIK ISSA TANZANIA FUMO MOHAMED FUMO ABDULHAMAN, HARUN BAMUSA, SAIR SALIM, ABDULKARIM (FAZUL) and one OMAR SAID OMAR.

The task of shooting down the aircraft was undertaken by ISSA OSMAN ISSA, SWALEH NAHBAN and ABDULMALIK who was their driver. ISSA OSMAN ISSA and SWALEH NAHBAN both fired the missiles.

The task of bombing paradise hotel in Kikambala was undertaken by FUMO MOHAMED FUMO, and HARUN BAMUSA, who both died during the explosion.

I OMAR SAID OMAR was tasked to look for our escape boat.

ABDULKARIM (FAZUL) was in charge of the whole operation while ABDULHAMAN and ISSA TANZANIA were both in Somalia to wait for us.

The Pajero car which was used by the suicide bombers was purchased by SWALEH NAHBAN and it was blue in colour but I cannot remember the registration number. SWALEH NAHBAN was given the money to purchase the Pajero by ABDULHAMAN who was the financial controller of the whole group. I can also recall that on 28th November, 2002 ABDULKARIM (FAZUL) called me through my cell phone and asked me if ISSA OSMAN ISSA, ABDULMALIK and SWALEH NAHBAN had arrived. I told him that they had not arrived.

When ISSA OSMAN ISSA, SWALEH NAHBAN and ABDULMALIK arrived at Lamu on 29th November, 2002 they explained to me what had happened. They told me that they fired the missiles at the aeroplane but they did not get it.

We stayed in Lamu for 2 days and then we left for Somalia on board MV Saudi which I did not know. In Somalia we went direct to Mogadishu and stayed in an apartment. When we arrived in Somalia we joined ABDULHAMAN and ISSA TANZANIA who were already there.

In Somalia we were doing nothing and ABDULHAMAN used to give us money for use.

I stayed in Somalia until May, 2003. while in Somalia ISSA OSMAN ISSA used to communicate to ABDULKARIM (FAZUL) and he told me that after the Kikambala bombing ABDULKARIM (FAZUL) went to Ethiopia and he had returned to Kenya again.

I left Somalia in May, 2003 and before leaving I was given US\$900 by ABDULHAMAN to come and spent while in Kenya. When I was leaving I left my cell phone with ABDULMALIK but I came with the Sim card which I threw away when I was arrested by Police on 1st August, 2003.

Before leaving Somalia I was given an assignment of looking for targets in Mombasa at tourist hotels like Diani Beach Hotel, Inter-continental and other hotels which are frequented by tourists. I was also told to look for cruise ships at the Kilindini harbour.

I do remember that I have been shown several photographs by the Police and I was able to intensify the following.

1. HARUNI BAMUSA - He was a member of our group who died during the Kikambala bombing.
2. FAZUL (ABDULKARIM - ABLUQMAN) - He is a member of our group, a senior member of AL-QAEDA and was the one who did the surveillance work of Moi Airport Mombasa.

FAHIDI - I know that he was involved in the 1998 bombing of US Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.

3. ISSA TANZANIA (real name SULEIMAN). He is also a member of our AL-QAEDA group. He was arrested in Somalia in April, 2003.
4. YAHYA SHEIK - He was involved in bombing of US Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998.
5. SAID BAMUSA - He is a brother to HARUNI BAMUSA but he is not a member of AL-QAEDA.
6. MUSA BAMUSA - He is a brother to HARUNI BAMUSA and SAID BAMUSA but not a member of AL-QAEDA Group.
7. SWALEH NABHAN - He is a member of our AL-QAEDA group.

I was also shown currencies for the following countries.

1. SOMALIA
2. ETHIOPIA
3. QATAR
4. BAHRAIN
5. USA
6. KENYA
7. YEMEN
8. MAURITIUS
9. COMOROS

I know these currencies belong to FAZUL because he has been collecting currencies from different countries.

I was shown a ID Card number 9632997 bearing the name of MOHAMED MWAKUZA KUZA with a photograph of ABDULMALIK who is one of our group member.

I was shown a basic weapon land written training manual which I did not know about. I could understand it to be on train of AK47 Rifles and bullets which I could explain how it works.

I was again shown two receipts which I identified as the ones which were given tome when I paid the house rent trough an agent.

I can also remember that during our operation, we used the following code words.

1. RAIN - All is well
2. DRY - A lot of police operations or security is tighty or no tourist activities.
3. NJULUKU - Money
4. WEDDING - Operation or attacks on targets
5. GUEST - Visitors
6. GIRLFRIEND - Wife

We also used codes on our telephone numbers as below:~

1234567890

9876543210

This means that 1 stands for 9, 2 stands for 8, 0 stands for 0 etc

For example 0722403612 will read as 0388607498: during the operation we also used the following e-mail numbers.

1. Dagama 06 2003 @ yahoo.com - for me OMAR SAID OMAR
2. Livingstone 707 @ yahoo.com - for me OMAR SAID OMAR
3. Mselaibrah 73 @ hotmail.com - for ABDULMALIK
4. Kidule 89 @hootmail.com. - for ISSA OSMAN ISSA
5. SUSANALEX 999 @ yahoo.com - for HASSAN SAID OMAR
6. Dhiopporko @ yahoo.com. - for HASSAN SAID OMAR
7. Seyyidhassan @ yahoo.com - for Hassan said Omar
8. Marcopolo 2004 @ Europe.com. - for SWALE NAHBAN

I remember that on 14th May, 2003 I received an e-mail from ABDULMALIK who was in Somalia.

He wanted to know if I had arrived in Mombasa. He told me that things in Somalia were fine and he wanted to know if there was anything new concerning some of our comrades whom he was staying with in Somalia.

He also wanted to know if the Police were looking for them. He wanted to know if there was anything new concerning me. He told me that I should keep in touch with him and inform him of any new activities.

On 26th May, 2003 I again received another e-mail from ABDULMALIK. He wanted to know if I had received his first e-mail. He also wanted if the situation in Mombasa was normal and inform them if all was well.

He also wanted to know if it was possible to start the surveillance which he had talked about when I was leaving Somalia in May, 2003.

On 18th June, 2003 I received an e-mail from ABDULHAMAN who wanted to know how I was doing because it was a long time since I had communicated personally to him.

He also told me that he wanted to send ABDULMALIK to Mombasa.

He also asked me about ABDULKARIM (FAZUL) and how far I had gone with the surveillance work.

On 4th July, 2003 I remember sending an e-mail to HASSAN SAID OMAR who was a big friend of mine and whom I had once visited at Moi University Eldoret.

HASSAN SAID OMAR had previously asked me the contacts of ABDULMALIK who was also a long friend of his. I told HASSAN SAID OMAR to give me his e-mail so that I could contact him incase I got ABDULMALIK'S e-mail. By that time I had the e-mail number of ABDULMALIK but I could not give HASSAN the address without first consulting ABDULMALIK.

ABDULMALIK later told me to give e-mail address to HASSAN and I gave him.

On 7th July, 2003 I received an e-mail from ABDULMALIK. In this e-mail he asked me how are things in Mombasa. He told me that all of them in Somalia are well. He also talked about my wife who was expectant and he told me not to worry and God will help me. He further told me to sent him the e-mail address of ISSA OSMAN ISSA (ALIAS MTI) He wanted to know if I had any contact with ISSA OSMAN ISSA.

On 8th September, 2003 I received an e-mail from HASSAN SAID OMAR. He told me that he has a new e-mail address. He further told me to tell ABDULMALIK that his new e-mail address was dhioppoko @ yahoo.com.

I also remember on 14th July, 2003 I received an e-mail from ABDULMALIK. He told me that he had received all my letters and thanked me. Concerning my wife he told me that God is there and he was praying for me.

He told me that our BOSS ABDULHAMAN was not with them. He gave me the e-mail of our boss ABDULHAMAN which was susan-alex 999 @ yahoo.com and he also told me that he will give me another e-mail the following day.

On 19th July, 2003 I tried to send an e-mail using dagama 062003 @ yahoo.com. to another e-mail of mine livingstone 707 @ hotmail.com which failed because of the spelling.

I remember, that during the month of June, 2003 around 25th to 26th I went to JUSTLAND PROPERTY which deals with rental houses. On arrival at the offices I found a secretary. I told her that I was looking for a house to rent within Mombasa Island costing between Kshs.10,000/= to 12,000/=.

The secretary referred me to the manager where by the manager told me that there are two apartments one in Tudor and another at SPAKI area. The manager told me to pay Kshs. 200/= for viewing the apartments. I was given a person from the office to go and show me the apartments in Tudor and Sparki.

We went to Tudor but did not like the apartment. We proceeded to Sparki where I identified the apartment.

We went back to the offices where I was told to pay Kshs. 6,000/= for agreement I also paid Kshs.2,000/= for deposit and another Kshs.12,000/= for the rent of that month. I paid in total Kshs.30,000/= and was given 2 receipts one for Kshs. 6,000/= and another one for Kshs. 24,000/=

The receipts which were given to me were bearing my fake names of AHMED ALI MOHAMED. The manager asked me the date I would like to move into the house. He told me to go to the apartment and see the landlord who will give me the key.

I went to the landlord who showed the receipts and he gave me the key.

In the beginning of July, FAISAL ALI NASSOR approached me and requested if I would allow him to stay in the house w3ith me. I agreed and he came. Later in the same month FAIZAL ALI NASSOR told me that he has communicated with ABDULKARIM (FAZUL) and that he FAZUL had also requested to come and live in the same house. I agreed and FAZUL cam and stayed in the house. This apartment is near Ronald Ngala primary school and also near a tent used as a church by Pastor Lai.

The house is 2 roomed with 2 toilets, a kitchen and an opening which we were using as a sitting room. Inside the house I had 1 Sanyo TV (black and white, utensils, 11 mattress and 1 plastic carpet which is green in colour with white sports.

When FAZUL and FAIZAL came to live in the house, they brought in one 5 deater sofaset which was red in colour with cream and black sport. One computer and window curtains. I used to visit ABDULKARIM (FAZUL) and FAIZAL ALI NASSOR in that apartment frequently because I was still living in Majengo with my wife at that time.

By the time when I was arrested by Police on 1st August, 2003 FAIZAL and FAZUL were living in that house.

That's all.

OMAR SAID OMAR

CERTIFICATE

I OMAR SAID OMAR certify that I have given the above statement voluntarily without any threat, fear or promise of any kind.

OMAR SAID OMAR

CERTIFICATE

I John Mulaulu certify that the above statement was given to me by the suspect voluntarily without any threats, fear, offer or promise of any kind.

JOHN MULAULU

APPENDIX C-IV:

Written Statement of Mombasa Muslim Leaders

Contents:

The following two pages are a letter from Mombasa Muslim Leaders addressed to the Honorable Njenga Karume, Kenya Minister for Defense. The letter is dated 25 February, 2007.

Background:

Following several mass-demonstrations and recent threats by Muslim leaders in Mombasa to disrupt the international cross-country championships held in the coastal city on 24 March 2007, the Minister of Defense, Hon. Njenga Karume, met with representatives of the Mombasa Muslim community. Under the aegis of the Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya ('CIPK'), they evidently took advantage of this opportunity to present him with the following statement setting out a broader set of issues and grievances.

February 25th 2007

Hon Njenga Karume, EBS
Minister for Defense
Government of the Republic of Kenya
Nairobi

Dear Honourable Karume

1. We acknowledge your invitation to meet the Muslim leaders. As we address you today, we do so, on our own behalf, on behalf of other Muslim leaders elsewhere in the country who are concerned by these matters and who we have consulted and also on behalf of millions of Kenyan Muslims.
2. At the onset we need to let you know that as Muslim Leaders, we have practised a lot of restraint and patience amid very difficult and provocative moments in the last four years of NARC rule. We have always sought consultation, including meeting President Kibaki a number of times. Therefore, today we shall be very honest and frank with you. Where we seem to be on the harsher side, we ask for your understanding, as Muslims today suffer even worse treatment.
3. First, we wish to reiterate that Muslims in Kenya, who are Kenyan citizens, are citizens by right. We do not owe it to any government, political party or person being citizens. Time and again, Muslims are made to feel as if favours are being granted to them by others. Muslims are made to feel as if they need to plead for certain things to be done for them. Today, Muslims are more aware and reject these patronising approaches.
4. Honourable Minister, your docket is that of the Minister for Defence. We shall address you shortly in that capacity. However, as a Minister in your government, we shall, in a most frank manner, address you in matters that touch on the safety, security and citizenship of Muslims in Kenya. We are aware, though you are a Minister like others; you also enjoy close relationship with many in the cabinet, including the President.
5. Our responsibility today is merely, to let you know, for the information of your government, the depth of anger and disillusion that we as Muslim Leaders, have for your government, which we helped propel into power. We who are here, held private discussions, here in Mombasa, with the Leader of the Official Opposition, as Hon Mwai Kibaki was then in late 2002, together with others. Upon agreements in that meeting we strongly supported NARC and Hon Mwai Kibaki for President.
6. Your government has the primary responsibility to serve Kenyans, whether Muslims or not. This responsibility primarily starts with upholding of the constitution and the rule of law. Indeed your government was a creation of our country's constitution. And your government enjoys power today because of our laws. It is these laws that make all Kenyans, including Muslims, pay taxes which are then used by your government to pay all government expenditures and projects. The responsibility of your government includes the protection of life, security, rights and freedoms of every Kenyan, including Muslims. Where a person has committed an offence, the

person is first presumed innocent in accordance with the law. Secondly he is brought to a court of law. Thirdly he is given opportunity to defend himself against charges that are defined by the law. And finally, if found guilty, he is sentenced in accordance with the law.

7. Hon Minister, your government has treated Muslims in a way, never seen before in the history of this country, either during the Kenyatta or Moi administrations. Indeed, your government has treated Muslims in a way never experienced by any community in Africa even under the worst dictators. We shall detail to you a few examples. But before we do so, let us recap what has happened recently in Somalia

Somalia has been fighting for 16 years without any threat to Kenya. When the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) took over it enjoyed unprecedented peace. Indeed because of this peaceful situation, a delegation of Kenyan Muslim leaders visited Mogadishu with the knowledge of Kenya's Minister for Foreign Affairs. Also a number of Kenyans, Muslims and non-Muslims went to Somalis for business ventures. Your government even hosted the ICU leadership in Kenya several times. However, when Ethiopia and American governments moved into Somalia to fight the ICU, your government took sides. Your government first of all broke all international conventions by refusing refugees, including children, women and the elderly, and instead returned them to their death to the battle field.

8. The examples, only a few, we would like to illustrate to you Hon Minister include:
 - a. Your government arrested and tortured Kenyan Muslims who were returning from Somalia during the latest war. Those Muslims were returning to their country! As said earlier, some of those of Muslims were coming from business ventures. We have not seen other Kenyans who have come from war torn areas of Uganda, Sudan and Eritrea being arrested. Why these?
 - b. Your government ignored all constitutional guarantees given to citizens as if Muslims were not citizens. No Muslim so far has been brought to any court of law and charged with any offence. Instead, Muslims were held in excess of 30 days, being moved from one police station to another, without being allowed access to lawyers or relatives.
 - c. Your government allowed foreign agents to interrogate and torture Muslims
 - d. Worst of all, your government has "deported" 26 Kenyan Muslims to Mogadishu. When you take a Kenyan to Mogadishu and you tell that government: "These are the people who were fighting against you" what would you expect to happen to these Kenyans? When you take Kenyans to Mogadishu where there is no established government or any court of law, what do you expect to happen to them?
 - e. Can you really, Honourable Minister or President Kibaki, today look at Muslims in the face and tell them that you are protecting them as you swore to do by the constitution? Can you Honourable Minister or President Kibaki, stand in public and state that Muslims should feel safe under your government? Of course not. Muslims are always guilty, according to actions of your government.
9. Therefore, Honourable Minister, as Muslim Leaders, we have refused to be enslaved by those people who we voted for into power. We have refused that we can pretend that all is well to the international communities, when our sons, daughters and relatives are in Mogadishu thrown there by your government. We have refused to

keep quiet and do nothing when your government actively works with other foreign government to harass, torture and even kill our people. We say enough is enough!

10. Honourable Minister, we hope you are in Mombasa for the good of our country or to enjoy the nice environment in this peaceful region. But as a Minister for Defence, like other Kenyans have spoken, we do not wish to imagine that your government will be lured into making Kenya, and the coastal area as Bases for the Americans. If you do not know yet, Honourable Minister, Muslims worldwide and also Muslims in Kenya are at war with the American government. This is no more secret. American government has declared war on Islam and Muslims. They are the superpower. But we believe that only Allah has all the power. Therefore, we besiege your government to think of Muslims as part of this country and therefore an important constituency you must listen to, while the American government is not.
11. Finally, Honourable Minister, Muslims are in Kenya to stay. We have been tortured, arrested and taken to Somalia to be put to death. But perhaps what is now most humiliating for us is for President Kibaki, Ministers Tuju and Kamanda, when they address public rallies to attack the Muslims and their leaders. This bespeaks a thousand words of what they hold of Muslims and their leaders. It is as if to let the world know that, Muslims and their leaders are a people who do not deserve their respect and a people who can be dealt with. This is offensive and humiliation per excellence. And with a government like this, what else should Muslims do? For us is to rely on God as we resist all forms of subjugation and discrimination. And to Allah we have put all our trust. And to Him we shall all return. Then it is He who shall adjudge who amongst us is truthful.

Thank you

Al-Qa'ida's (mis)Adventures in the Horn of Africa

Part II: Al-Qa'ida "In Their Own Words" The Harmony Documents

The United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) has the responsibility to plan and synchronize efforts across the Department of Defense for the war on terrorism. In conducting their operations over the past several years—particularly Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)—representatives of USSOCOM have uncovered scores of documents authored by members of al-Qa'ida. These documents, which currently reside in a classified database called "Harmony," shed important new light onto the inner workings of the organization as well as the personalities and preferences of their authors. The database houses thousands of items with a wide range of content, including loose papers, multimedia, and personal letters.

In the latter half of 2005, the Combating Terrorism Center (CTC) at West Point was given access to a small subset of recently declassified Harmony documents and asked to provide an analysis of potential network vulnerabilities and conflicts of interests within the organization. The CTC was chosen to conduct this study based partly upon its expertise in analyzing al-Qa'ida's strategic texts, jihadi images, video clips, and other materials distributed on the Internet. The documents used in this study were initially identified, processed and translated based upon criteria established to support military planning efforts, including:

- al-Qa'ida documents (media, letters, loose papers) discussing ideology, tactics, techniques, procedures, strategy, and operations;
- Taliban documents discussing prior or future terrorist actions in Afghanistan or the region and the interaction/coordination with al-Qa'ida;
- any material related to al-Qa'ida extremist ideology, training, recruiting, and logistics flow;
- documents discussing any al-Qa'ida operation; and
- any dialogue from al-Qa'ida that threatens another country/group or its leadership.

The initial 28 documents extracted from the Harmony database that met combinations of the search criteria described above range from single page letters to 70+ page excerpts from larger jihadi texts, and were authored both before and after September 11, 2001. Every document released to the CTC from the Harmony database is included on the

enclosed CD-ROM in both original Arabic text and English translation and is posted on the CTC website at <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/aq.asp>.

Harmony: Al-Qa'ida's (mis)Adventures in the Horn of Africa

In late 2006 and early 2007, USSOCOM released another 24 documents to the CTC. This iteration of Harmony focuses on al-Qa'ida's continuing organizational, operational, personnel and pecuniary challenges in the Horn of Africa (HOA). Although most terrorist groups seek out and thrive in ungovernable spaces, the HOA countries pose greater challenges to al-Qa'ida than one might expect. The HOA is a surprisingly difficult area in which to operate, especially for an organization that relies on secrecy, deception, and the loyalty of its operators and affiliates. The area is ripe with political turmoil, corruption, and poverty and these local concerns sometimes trump or hamper al-Qa'ida's efforts to wage their global jihad.

As in the first Harmony study, these newly released documents reveal a different side of al-Qa'ida that is often not shown in traditional media reporting and literature. Harmony HOA continues to show that oftentimes so-called al-Qa'ida allies and sympathizers do not necessarily want automatic subjugation to the group, do not share the same religious fervor, and often desire some kind of compensation before providing operational security or support. These documents demonstrate that although al-Qa'ida did have some success in terms of planning and executing attacks, raising funds for operations, and establishing contacts throughout the region, they also expose their failures and frustrations.

Though Harmony illustrates that al-Qa'ida faced significant challenges in the HOA, it is not the intent to discount its ability to adapt to its operational environment. On the contrary, these documents reflect how the organization overcame obstacles and remained steadfast in its efforts. Moreover, they are testimony that some senior operational leaders of al-Qa'ida in the HOA (most notably Abu Hafs al-Masri, Saif al-Adl, and Abdullah Muhammad Fazul) were extremely talented and resourceful. Unlike some 'adventurers' from the Middle East and elsewhere who went to Pakistan and Afghanistan for vacation during the Soviet occupation to claim jihadi credentials, there is no question the senior members of al-Qa'ida were deadly serious about their mission in the HOA, and that their jihadi status was unfortunately well-earned.

Thankfully, al-Qa'ida has not been successful in generating wide-ranging support of local populations or securing wide swaths of territory even though they have maintained a continuous presence in the HOA for almost 15 years. Recent alleged al-Qa'ida activity in Somalia and US counterterrorism actions throughout the HOA further reinforce this point. Indeed, the HOA will indeed be a place of interest for both al-Qa'ida and the United States for many years to come.

HARMONY DOCUMENT LIST

Letter from the Taliban AFGP-2002-003297	179
Ciphers and Status of bin Laden's Security AFGP-2002-003677	180
Statement Concerning the Assassination of brother "Abi Tarek" AFGP-2002-003705	182
The Five Letters to the African Corps Letter 1 AFGP-2002-600053	183
The Five Letters to the African Corps Letter 2 AFGP-2002-600053	184
The Five Letters to the African Corps Letter 3 AFGP-2002-600053	185
The Five Letters to the African Corps Letter 4 AFGP-2002-600053	187
The Five Letters to the African Corps Letter 5 AFGP-2002-600053	188
The Ogaden File: Operation Holding (Al-Msk) AFGP-2002-600104	189
Saif Al Islam's Report on the Jihad-Wal Camp AFGP-2002-600108	191
Situation Report from Somalia AFGP-2002-600110	192
Trip Report and the Situation in the Southern Region AFGP-2002-600113	194
A Report from Saif Al-Adl AFGP-2002-600114	195
Photographs of Fazul Abdellah Mohamed AFGP-2002-800080	197

Kenya Airways Ticket 1 AFGP-2002-800081	198
Kenya Airways Ticket 2 AFGP-2002-800083	199
Fazul's Travel and Educational Documents AFGP-2002-800084	200
Student ID Card for Said Bakar AFGP-2002-800086	201
Passports of Fazul and Maimouna Mohammed AFGP-2002-800087	202
Somalian Passport of Halimo Farah Abdillah AFGP-2002-800088	203
Comoros Passport of [Fazul] Abdallah Mohamed AFGP-2002-800089	204
Ziad Barre and Events in Somalia AFGP-2002-800517	205
Invoices for al-Qa'ida and Islamic Union Expenses AFGP-2002-800573	208
Abu 'Ata Al-Sharqi Reports from Afghanistan AFGP-2002-800581	209
Abu Hafs' Report on Operations in Somalia AFGP-2002-800597	210
Report on the Needs of the Mujahidin in Somalia AFGP-2002-800600	212
Hassan Aweys Kenya Visa Application AFGP-2002-800611	213
Letters on al-Qa'ida's Operations in Africa AFGP-2002-800621	214
A Quick Review of the Current Political Situation AFGP-2002-800639	216

Abu Belal's Report on Jihad in Somalia AFGP-2002-800640	217
Political Difficulties and Current Events in Ethiopia AFGP-2002-800641	219
Meeting Notes and a Letter from Al-Wali AFGP-2003-001293H	221
Iraqi Intelligence Service Reports on Al-Qa'ida Threats in Djibouti ISGQ-2005-00024493	222

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-003297**

Author: Unknown

Title: Letters from the Taliban

Date: Unknown

Length: 3 pages

Synopsis

The document contains only one-line summaries of papers related to the Taliban.

Key Themes

The document itself consists of one-line summaries of papers from another (not included) document. In the referenced document, there is a detailed map and description of the Battle of Khaled in Hira. There is also a possibly forged Taliban government stamp from its Khartoum embassy, and an official letter from the Taliban government official al-Haj Mullah 'Abd al-Jalil to 'Abdallah.

Doc ID: AFGP-2002-003677

Date: 1996-1998

Author: Multiple and unknown

Length: 11 pages

Title: Ciphers and Status of bin Laden's Security

Synopsis

A series of incomplete documents that consist of (1) codewords and ciphers used by al-Qaeda; (2) an assessment of Osama bin Laden's personal security situation; (3) letters primarily concerning the disposition of three prisoners held by Iran that are important to al-Qaeda; (4) a letter discussing the frustrating situation on the front lines in Afghanistan, and the foreign fighters there.

Key Themes

The first part of the handwritten document is a table of contents, apparently for another missing document, discussing training camps and operations conducted by al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups, including Hezbollah.

Next, the document contains a cipher, with letters that corresponds to numbers.

It then lists code words to be used for countries and cities within al-Qaeda's anticipated sphere of operations, certain key people, and a variety of other key words, including nuclear, biological and chemical weapons vocabulary.

Ciphers and codewords for the times of meetings and operations are also covered, with examples.

The writer negatively assesses the security of the location and food for Osama bin Laden's weekly lunch meetings, in light of possible American attempts to assassinate him.

1. The source of the food is not secure.
2. The food is not distributed securely.
3. It is obvious which plate Osama bin Laden will receive.
4. Osama bin Laden drinks water from a general guard.

There follow several letters, one a thank-you letter, and another enquiring about the possibility of obtaining the release of several prisoners.

Letter to Abu Ibrahim, from Muhammad Atif: This letter provides updates on several financial transactions, and a number of associates.

A lengthy letter discusses the status of three al-Qaeda prisoners of the Iranians. The letter reports that the prisoners, along with other Arabs, Afghans, and Pakistanis, have been moved to Iran through Tajikistan after several failed attempts, including the use of Masoud's airplane, and a truck that rolled over. The writer suspects that 'they' might actually be trying to eliminate them.

The writer then lays out three options for obtaining the release of the prisoners from Iran.

- A. Direct and indirect mediation with the Iranians, using a combination of diplomacy and threats. This is the recommended solution.

- B. Taking several Iranians hostage to exchange for the prisoners. This will have complex consequences, and will serve to divide up the Muslim world, but is worth discussing with the Taliban.
- C. Bomb Iranian interests abroad until they release the prisoners.

The writer also requests the return of 'the Pakistani' so that training and operations can begin.

Letter to Sheik Abu Hafs: This letter continues discussing the prisoner situation. The writer has discussed the situation with a Taliban commander, who requests a car, and warns of not being bothersome to the Taliban.

The letter then provides news on the prisoners. Three of the prisoners are alive. A fourth was killed. Several Pakistanis have been released after their relatives intervened, or after they bought their way out.

Letter to Abdul Aziz: The writer provides updates and instructions on various operations, and expresses concern about the security situation.

The final letter describes the situation on the front lines in the fighting between the Taliban and Mas'oud (presumably the Northern Alliance). The writer is frustrated at the back-and-forth nature of the fighting, and believes that the Taliban have lost their will to fight. Many foreign fighters have abandoned the front lines in despair, and the writer then provides status updates on those that remain. Some refuse to fight, some want to leave for personal reasons, or to engage in projects elsewhere, including in Saudi Arabia. A small number are staying on the front, including a group at Bagram, some Jordanians, and an Iraqi.

There are also two brothers from Ogadin (Ethiopia), one of whom wants to get married, and the other to be part of the Eritrea security group.

Doc ID: AFGP-2002-003705

Length: 4 pages

Title: An explanatory statement concerning circumstances surrounding the assassination of brother "Abi Tarek"

Author: The Eritrean Islamic Jihad Movement Secretariat

Date: Sha'aban 22, 1417H (January 2, 1997)

Synopsis

The Eritrean Islamic Jihad Movement denounces the assassinations of Abi Tareq and Sister Zubaidah, and connects them with a series of attacks and plots by the Popular Front in Eritrea to divide the Eritrean opposition, sever their connections with their supporters, and obstruct da'wa and jihad.

Key Themes

On December 21, 1996, the Eritrean Islamic Jihad Movement had issued a statement condemning the assassination of Abi Tareq and Sister Zubaidah.

According to the document, the Popular Front has seized on divisions within Eritrea's revolutionary organizations and begun assassinating, or attempting to assassinate key figures within the movements, including the Liberation Front and jihad movements. It has also accused Arab countries of supporting the jihad groups, and has tried to turn international opinion against the jihadists. At first the groups blamed one another, which increased their internal dissension.

The Popular Front assassinated the following people:

1. Mohamoud Hasab in Kasala
2. Idris Hanqala in Kasala
3. The assassination of Sa'eed Saleh in Kasala
4. The assassination of 'Uthman 'Ajeeb in Khartoum.

It also attempted to assassinate the following people:

1. 'Abdulla Idris, president of the Eritrean Liberation front in Khartoum.
2. 'Abd Al-Qader Jailani, president of the Eritrean Liberation Front - the National Council in Kasala.

After the attack on Jailani, the Sudanese government discovered that the 'popular front' was behind the attacks. The Aforqi regime [perhaps another name for the Popular Front] has also conducted attacks on civilians and blamed them on the Mujahideen.

The Popular Front designed the assassination of Abi Tareq and Sister Zubaidah to accomplish several objectives.

1. To create conflict between the Eritrean opposition and Sudan, which is hosting them.
2. To exacerbate pre-existing problems within the Jihad movement.
3. To hurt the international reputation of the Jihad movement. The timing of the assassinations was designed to the Jihad movement just as it was canvassing for support abroad at the beginning of Ramadan.
4. To obstruct da'wa and jihad that had been increasing among the Eritrean opposition after the Sudanese government relaxed restrictions.

The Eritrean Islamic Jihad movement prefers clear ideology, dialogue, moderation, and reform to physical violence.

Doc ID: AFGP-2002-600053 (Letter One)
Date: Mid 1990s
Author: "Your Uncle"
Length: 32 pages
Title: The Five Letters to the African Corps I

Synopsis: This letter is addressed to "Dear Brother Saif" and signed by "Your Uncle." The author has prepared a lengthy response to issues raised in two previous letters (not included in this collection) sent by Saif from Somalia where he is in charge of Al-Qa'ida activity. Uncle gives frank observations about the prospects for jihad in Somalia.

Key Themes: Uncle believes that Somalia is not ready for classic jihad and that Al-Qa'ida will not be able to find an ally with an identical intellectual force. The goal is to expel crusader forces from Somalia even if a semi-Islamic, semi-democratic government were to gain power.

Saif is warned that the Somali movement he is working with is in danger of isolating itself from the masses, and if the masses become suspicious of a movement it has no prospect for success.

The U.S. invasion of Somalia presents Saif with a golden opportunity to strike at the "bald eagle" now that it has landed unexpectedly in his sights.

Flexibility is required. If Al-Qa'ida could work with Sayyaf, Hikmatyar, and Burhan to achieve its purposes in Afghanistan, then Saif can work with Aideed, Mahdi, and Kharteet in Somalia. The Somali leadership, however, must be bolstered since they have even less manhood than Saddam Hussein and Arafat.

Uncle proposes a 5 point strategy to unite Somali forces and create an Islamic national front:

1. Expulsion of the foreign international presence.
2. Rebuilding of state institutions.
3. Establishment of domestic security.
4. Comprehensive national reconciliation.
5. Economic reform and combating famine.

The message ends with encouragement to persevere through financial difficulties and act according to the traditions "of our noble Messenger." Uncle cites God feeding Quraysh and the great Badr raid as examples of victories that come through the "confident belief that God will grant victory."

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-600053 (Letter Two)**

Date: September 30, 1993

Author: Hassan al-Tajiki

Length: 11 pages

Title: The Five Letters to the African Corps II

Synopsis: The letter provides an update and analysis concerning jihad activity in Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Russia, and China.

Key Themes: Tajikistan is judged to be a challenging but not hopeless area for jihad activity.

Russia is in chaos and the former republics of the Soviet Union are weak. America is preparing to fill the power vacuum in the region.

In Afghanistan America is supporting warlords and exploiting Civil War to neutralize opposition to its control of the region.

China is a rising power where future relations with the Islamic world will be of great importance.

The letter concludes with an upbeat assessment for future jihad operations in Tajikistan.

Doc ID: AFGP-2002-600053 (Letter Three)
Date: May 24, 1994
Author: Hassan
Length: 36 pages
Title: The Five Letters to the African Corps III

Synopsis: Congratulations for the victory in Somalia and a strategic review of worldwide jihad operations. Success of the Africa Corps is contrasted with the difficult position of the Asian Corps.

Key Themes: Hassan begins by expressing his congratulations to the Africa Corps for their great victory in Somalia. He would like to join them is having difficulties traveling because he is now wanted for security reasons in Pakistan.

He asks the questions: "So how were our amazing Corps and its starving African Muslim allies able to be victorious over the greatest power in the world today?" The answer lies in the power of God, because "When we are truly fighting in the name and on behalf of God, we have nothing to fear..."

In Somalia, Islamic forces were able to exploit America's Vietnam Complex, because the American's fear getting bogged down in a real war. Al-Qa'ida needs to develop a tactical doctrine to exploit the weakness of its great enemy, and a Counter-Intelligence strategy to confront the power of the American security agencies.

Victory in Somalia must be followed up to avoid giving the defeated foe time to regroup. The strategy of the "Jewish West" is to strike at the periphery of the Muslim lands. The original crusaders tried to strike at the center of the Islamic lands, but were defeated. The Crusaders adapted, conquered the periphery, and were then able to control the Arabian Peninsula and Palestine.

Somalia represents a victory for Al-Qa'ida on the periphery. The hour for regaining the heartland has arrived, but much training is required before this phase can begin.

While the Africa Corps has been successful, the Asian Corps is very weak with only 5 members. Yemen is described as a crucial battlefield, an auspicious location for declaring jihad in the Arabian Peninsula.

More effective radio broadcasts are needed to launch a propaganda campaign in Yemen and Somalia. Demands should include:

Evacuation of the Crusaders, Jews, and infidel forces from the Peninsula.

Destruction of churches and Jewish and Buddhist temples.

Hassan observes that radio stations are more powerful than atomic bombs and that several dozen committed young believers can bring correct teaching to the whole area. Martyrdom attacks in Yemen create an auspicious opportunity to declare jihad in the Arabian Peninsula.

Next comes a review of lessons learned in Tajikistan. Serious errors have been committed by the Nahdha who have relinquished their Islamic identity. Nahdha like Saddam Hussein exploits Islam to gain popular support, but by no means expresses true adherence to Islam.

In Kabul, warlords who pursue their own agendas are weakening the work of jihad.

Doc ID: AFGP-2002-600053 (Letter Four)

Date: May 24, 1994

Author: Hassan

Length: 14 pages

Title: The Fourth Letter about Jihad in the Caucasus

Synopsis: Hassan is writing from an Al-Qa'ida training camp and relates his disappointments concerning reverses Al-Qa'ida has experienced in Central Asia. He also seeks to apply lessons learned from the arrest of international terrorist Carlos.

Key Themes: In Tajikistan Al-Qa'ida has been outmaneuvered by the Nahdha movement and Ahmad Shah Mas'oud who have been able to extract arms and ammunition from Al-Qa'ida without providing training. Demoralized Mujahideen have been leaving the movement.

Arab fighters in northern Afghanistan are loathed by Mas'oud and his commanders and in Pakistan Arab fighters are restricted and harassed by Pakistani authorities. Combating Islam is now both a state motto and policy in that country. In Pakistan Islam is a "folkloric" religion.

Hassan states that Al-Qa'ida in Pakistan is besieged and that "All we have is the beleaguered space between our camp and Kabul in which to move with relative freedom."

Jews are gaining strength in Russia. Hassan engages in the eschatological speculation that the Jewish nuclear project will prepare the way for Armageddon and the rule of King Anti-Christ. He proposes bringing the jihad to Moscow with the ultimate objective of bringing jihad to Jerusalem.

Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan are essential fronts for fighting to overcome the developing American blockade in Central Asia.

The extradition of Carlos emphasizes the need for preserving strong, secure rear areas in Sudan and Afghanistan.

Hassan says that he is bored in Afghanistan and want to relocate his family to Sudan.

Doc ID: AFGP-2002-600053 (Letter Five)

Date: 1994?

Author: Hassan al-Tajiki

Length: 14 pages

Title: The Fifth Letter to the Africa Corps

Synopsis: An analysis evaluating the impact of jihad in the Caucasus. Written while fighting is raging in Grozny, Hassan sees this struggle holding great promise for the future of jihad.

Key Themes: The Soviet Union collapsed as a direct result of the war in Afghanistan. This left the U.S. to run the world in an autocratic manner. The U.S. alliance of Western states is fragile, however, due to the warfare inherent in the capitalist system.

The new world order is America against everyone, and everyone against the Muslim. The Jews have succeeded in creating a Crusader alliance among Orthodox, Protestant, and Catholic churches. Then they added Hindu and Confucian Buddhist power in India, China, and Japan.

This alliance is fragile and just as the 11th and 12th century Crusaders succumbed to infighting, so too will this alliance. Jihadists can look forward to Russian gangs selling nuclear weapons and ultimately providing nuclear arms for the jihad.

The Caucasus is a strategically important zone because it provides access to the West. The U.S. is attempting to use Turkey and Pakistan to isolate the region, but the Chechens are rugged warriors.

Furthermore, harsh Russia violence in the region means only opportunities for martyrdom and paradise for Muslims. The Crusader strategy will backfire because the "bloody governing" of the Russians will result in a disaster inflicted by Islamic forces.

Al-Qa'ida can best support Chechen rebels by striking in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Arab fighters are at a disadvantage in the area since they do not know the language and culture.

In an aside, Hassan comments that the jihadi missionary must be patient. Most Muslims will not pick up a weapon and declare jihad "unless he has tasted killing and felt the knife as it passed across his throat."

Therefore the Crusader wars are welcomed, but the armed missionary must realize that his moving amongst Muslims whose Islam exists in Name only." Apostasy reigns, not only in Turkey and Pakistan, but also in Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The challenge for Al-Qa'ida is to unite the rising jihadi spirit in Arab lands with that in the Caucasus. The regions of Ingushetia, Dagestan, Abkhazia, and Azerbaijan are fruitful areas for expansion because of the hostility toward Russia in those areas.

Doc ID: AFGP-2002-600104

Length: 20 pages

Author: Sayf al-Islam

Date: August 1994 (regarding events occurring from January 20, 1993 to December 31, 1993)

Title: The Ogaden File: Operation Holding (Al-Msk)

Synopsis

What is apparently a personal narrative by Sayf al-Islam that describes how Abu Hafs of al-Qa'ida sent him and a team of al-Qa'ida operatives to Somalia and the Ogaden region of Ethiopia to construct training camps, train members of the General Islamic Union in military tactics and ideology, and to assist them in fighting the enemy.

Key Themes

Going to Ogaden

Abu Hafs sent a team of al-Qa'ida operatives in January 1993 from Peshawar, Afghanistan to Nairobi, Kenya to train the General Islamic Union in Somalia and the Ogaden region of Ethiopia, which had been promised by Abu Ubaydah, who was based in Kenya.

Prior to departure, the al-Qa'ida operatives received training in ideology and travel procedures. They wore European clothes, and traveled in groups of two or three, always with one person in the group who spoke English. The operatives had a three-fold mission:

1. To find and establish a new base for military operations.
2. To find a base area that was as close to the 'Arab region' as possible.
3. To train Somalian and Ogaden jihad forces.

Upon arrival in Nairobi, Sayf al-Islam and the other operatives met with Abu Ubaydah, and the Green Team agreed to go to Ogaden, partly in order to honor the agreement between Abu Ubaydah and the General Islamic Union. Sayf al-Islam had doubts about the feasibility of Ogaden due to its isolation and rough terrain. In Nairobi, the Green Team wrote a plan to train supported guerrilla platoons.

The Green Team traveled to Ogaden by hiring a small private plane from Kenya that landed at the village of Luuq in Somalia, where they were met by representatives of the General Islamic Union, and transported by armed convoy to the camp in Ogaden.

Sayf al-Islam provides a detailed topographical and ethnographic description of the region, probably in part to fulfill the first mandate for the al-Qa'ida mission.

In Ogaden

In Ogaden, the Green Team found that the camp of the local General Islamic Union branch, headed by Abd al-Salam Uthman, was primitive, unprotected, and strategically poorly placed. After meeting with a second group, headed by Abdullah Mohammed Ira, they eventually built a new camp, protected by two perimeters, on a nearby mountain. In describing the site selection and camp construction process, the author is keenly aware of the strategic importance of topography and natural resources, and describes the layout of the camp and its location in some detail.

Apparently another file describes the training program in detail, but in this document, Sayf al-Islam summarizes a three-step training program. While Sayf al-Islam was in Ogaden, the camp graduated two full classes, totaling approximating 460 recruits.

1. Use of different types of weapons, discipline, adapting to military life (5 weeks).
2. Specialist training in various units (recon, command, administration, combat) (2-3 weeks)
3. Recruits grouped into supported guerrilla platoons (2-3 weeks)

Between the second and third phases, Abu Hafs came to the region from Pakistan to discuss al-Qa'ida help with the revolutionary council (of the General Islamic Union). Although they were not able to agree on aid to the Somalis, Sayf al-Islam was appointed al-Qa'ida's representative to the General Islamic Union.

Sayf al-Islam was soon forced to deal with a planned separation of the Ogaden branch of the General Islamic Union from the main Somali organization, on the grounds that the main organization had abandoned jihad, and refused monetary and military support to the Ogaden branch. Sayf al-Islam managed to convince the Ogaden branch to stay, in part due to dangling the presence of al-Qa'ida in Somalia. However, Abd al-Salam Uthman went abroad, despite Sayf al-Islam's advice against it (as the timing was not right), to rally support unsuccessfully for the Ogaden branch's jihad.

Sayf al-Islam continued the training program despite an attack from the enemy in August, which was successfully repulsed. The author also describes dealing with an incident where members of the General Islamic Union requisitioned a car from a group of Sufis, and as a result caused a rift between Sufis, and Salafists in the region. Sayf al-Islam was worried that this split would open up a second front, and mediated a face-saving end to the conflict.

Sayf al-Islam also describes the battle of Da'rduur in September 1993, where the mujahideen use their new training to stop the enemy's advance, and push them back. After the recruits' graduation, as military advisor, Sayf al-Islam organized a series of meetings among the Ogaden commanders where they created an operational plan to take advantage of their new training, and advance against the enemy. As a result, the Ogaden jihadists successfully began advancing in October 1993, and Sayf al-Islam returned to Beled Huwa' to meet with Abu Fatima. He suggests learning from the experiences of the battles, forming leadership, and investigating how to shape and liberate the region.

On several occasions, Sayf al-Islam mentions hearing news of events outside of the region, including the killing of 18 US soldiers in Somalia and the attack on the Russian Parliament, the Oslo Accords, and a referendum in Egypt.

Doc ID: AFGP-2002-600108

Title: Saif Al Islam's Report on the Jihad-Wal Camp

Author: Saif Al Islam Almasri

Date: Unknown

Length: 3 pages

Synopsis

Saif Al Islam Almasri writes an exit report from his time as 'ameer' of Jihad-Wal camp in Afghanistan, providing reasons for his failures, and suggesting what can be done so that those mistakes are not repeated again.

Key Themes

Saif Al Islam Almasri looks back on the two years and ten months he spent as leader ('ameer') of Jihad-Wal camp in Khost, Afghanistan. In his report, he attempts to write down lessons learned, but hopes that the recipient has been reading and storing all the previous letters he sent. He claims that he will discuss a number of topics, but there is only one topic discussed in the document:

Receiving and delegating responsibilities

There were two main problems with the way in which Saif received the ameership, First, the responsibilities (over more than four camps) were greater than originally envisioned. Second, and more importantly, the previous ameer and other brothers had left their posts without providing guidance to Saif. As a result, he had no idea how to deal with 'outside entities' and many predicaments arose. Saif did in fact seek help from previous ameer, but many problems cropped up after the previous ameer was no longer available. So that this unfortunate situation will not happen again, Saif suggests three policies be implemented: (1) The old ameer must be present when the new ameer takes over; (2) The old ameer must explain the working of the camp, and the nature of all the relevant relationships; (3) The new ameer must receive an archive of all documents used since the beginning of the camp.

Doc ID: AFGP-2002-600110

Length: 5 pages

Date: 1993, 1996, 1997

Title: Situation Report from Somalia

Author: Various

Synopsis

A number of disparate reports that detail the financial and living situation prevalent in the organization's projects in Somalia, and describe the situation in Somalia in the face of Ethiopian attacks, attempts by the Somali tribes to unify, and cooperation with the Ittihad.

Key Themes

The first news report (dated 7 September 1996, written by correspondent Harun Khan Amin) describes a military attack by Ethiopian forces and their secular Somali allies against the forces of the Islamic Union (al-Ittihad al-Islami) and the Ogaden fundamentalists (presumably they are a branch of the Islamic Union – see AFGP-2002-600104), who had taken shelter and were using training camps in the Gedo region of Somalia. After a series of bomb attacks in Addis Ababa against a bus, a hotel, and a bridge, as well as an assassination attempt against the Ethiopian Minister of Transportation, Ethiopia convinced the leader of the Marehan tribes, as well as the leader of Somali secular forces, General Masali, to attack the Ogaden fundamentalists in the wake of Farrah Aidid's death. The combined Ethiopian-Somali National Front swept the fundamentalists from three cities, Balad Huwa, Luuq, and Dalo. The fundamentalists condemned the attack, and vowed to continue to fight within Ethiopia, but were thrown into confusion for a time. Kenya also condemned the attack, saying that one of its soldiers was killed in cross-border violence.

The second news report (dated 7 September 1996, written by correspondent Shu'ayb al-Salihi) describes events in the Lower Juba region during the Gedo offensive. Marghan, a Somali leader based in Kismayo, moved with his tribesmen toward Kenya in an attempt to unite the Darud tribe (it has three constituent groups, the Mujirtin, the Ogaden, and the Marihan). He also attempted to retrieve weapons that he had left in Kenya in the face of attacks from Aideed three or four years ago, but was blocked by the 'Abdallah tribe. A number of Somali leaders and tribes are mentioned in the report, especially Ogaden leaders.

A financial report, written by Mukhtar Husayn Kaim on 16 January 1997, describes the costs associated with a pond project, which has a budget of \$10,000

The third news report (dated 1 February 1997, written by Shu'ayb al-Salihi) describes the current situation in the Lower Jubbah region of Somalia. Engineers from the Gulf have arrived to gather information. Al-Akhwan are present in Kambooni. A technical director for the 'farm' has been appointed, money has been set aside for buying 'agricultural necessities', and the workers have not yet been trained [The translation seems to be using code words for weapons, fighters, and training camps]. The Ethiopians continue their attacks, but have been double-crossed by 'Ali Mahdi, who sold 70 tons of weapons he received from them in Mogadishu.

The next report (by Nur al-Din al-Bahar) describes the financial situation of the Fishing Project. The engineers have purchased boats and refrigerators, but do not have enough money for necessities in the face of the failure of the 'plan'. They will try to sell some boats and refrigerators to raise capital.

The following report (by all the engineers, Khalid Mukhtar, Tawfiq al-Mumbasi, Nur al-Din al-Malindi, and

Shu'ayb al-Malindi) describes the dire living situation in what they find themselves.

Finally, there is a report from Salih 'Abd-al-Wahid to Sheikh Abu-Hafs on 1 December 1993. Three days earlier, Salih met with Sheikh 'Abdallah Sahl, Hasan Tahir, and 'Uthman, and discussed several points amid a concern for secrecy.

1. They needed to strike UN forces, and more specifically American forces in Somalia.
2. If the Ittihad carries out a military operation, Salih's group will rally the Mujahidin to work for the Ittihad, otherwise Salih's group will continue to help the secularist groups.
3. Salih's groups is willing to pay all expenses.

Sheikh Hasan advocated continuing to use political means until they had built up a sufficiently large and trained military force, to which Salih responded that the Sheikh had not sent any forces for training to the camps already open. Sheikh Hasan replied that the camps were vulnerable to air attack, and the Shura council preferred in-house training in Mogadishu. Abu Hafs agreed to close the camps. Sheikh Hasan has not been in Ittihad for two years, but maintains strong ties.

Doc ID: AFGP-2002-600113

Date: Unknown

Author: Omar al-Sumale

Length: 6 pages

Title: A Short Report on the Trip from Nairobi to Cape Kambooni and the Situation in the Southern Region

Synopsis: Omar describes the tribal population, the region's cities, and the topography. He also writes about the schedule of future work, provides some examples of terrorist operations that his group carried out, and gives his opinion on the location and the future of the operation.

Key Themes: The notes made in the first section represent a terrorist scouting report for the Kenyan coast popular with tourists. Special attention is given to the areas where tourists congregate, and the patrols conducted by the police. Tactics for avoiding police detection are described as well as navigational details for moving by ship along the coast.

The second part of the document begins with ethnographic information about Bajuni, Ogaden, and Jal Jaal people of coastal northern Kenya and Somalia. Political programs were established with all three to promote their cooperation with Al-Qa'ida.

Operational requirements for the region are established, and the results of two operations analyzed.

Ambush of Belgian Patrol. Al-Qa'ida supported forces in Somalia are credited with killing a Belgian soldier in an ambush and driving the Belgians out of the region.

Attacks against Indian forces. Al-Qa'ida supported forces are credited with a successful attack against the Indian Army encampment at Bols Quqani, and in another operation driving the Indian out of Kambooni.

Omar has a high opinion of the local fighters who have proven to be successful and have inspired many Muslim youth to sign up and be fighters.

Doc ID: AFGP-2002-600114

Length: 7 pages

Author: Saif Al-'Adl

Title: A Report from Saif Al-'Adl

Date: January 17, 1994

Synopsis

Saif al-'Adl suggests, after a thorough investigation, that al-Qa'ida buy a launch in Somalia. He also evaluates the Al-Hadidiyah forest as a base for the organization, and gives a positive report on the local leadership, in the form of Sheikh Hasan and his Deputy 'Abd Al-'Aziz, and their recent tour to gather support from local tribes.

Key Themes

About buying a launch

Saif Al-'Adl begins by discussing in detail the possibility of buying a launch, and recommends buying it. The first issue is whether the venture will actually succeed. Major concerns include:

1. The height of the waves as the launch approaches shore, which should be overcome by buying a fiberglass boat.
2. Coast guard patrols, which should not be a problem once the launch passes Lamu island, and heads toward Kionja.
3. Finding expert sailors who are not also morally reprehensible. Al-'Adl suggests Yemeni Muhammed 'Aboh as trustworthy.
4. Finding an expert captain to bring the ship back [it is unclear whether this is the launch or the ship that meets the launch]. Again, Al-'Adl's contact is an expert, but not trustworthy.

The second issue is the ability of the launch to transport equipment from the ship to shore. Al-'Adl describes the technical specifications of the launch, and pronounces it large enough to be useful. He is in the process of attempting to bargain the owner down to 800,000 shillings, but leaves the decision to the recipient of the letter depending on the price.

The third issue is the possibility of using the launch as a profitable venture. Al-'Adl calculates in detail the potential costs and benefits of transporting and selling fish, and concludes they can make a profit on their investment. Strategically, a successful fishing company can also establish a controlling presence on the coast.

About Al-Hadidiyah forest

Saif Al-'Adl reports on the advantages of using Al-Hadidiyah forest as a location for refuge and training. The extreme density of the trees, an insect that drives animals insane, and the impassibility of routes into the forest during the rainy season all mean that it is difficult for people to live there. A ravine with water and fish, protection from air attack, and varied terrain useful for most kinds of training are positive reasons to use the area. Al-'Adl describes the area's location relative to other important points, as well as a visit to a training camp on a beach of Wadi al-Jihad.

About the existing local leadership

Saif Al-'Adl positively rates the leadership capability of the local jihad leaders, Sheikh Hasan, who excels in da'wa and political matters, and his deputy 'Abd Al-'Aziz, who excels in military matters. Al-'Adl compliments the leaders' loyalty and dedication, and notes that they desperately need help with military

organization and administration. The local leaders understand the al-Qa'ida is currently short of funds, and has not asked for any.

About a leadership tour

Sheikh Hasan met in Kelpeo with the sheikhs of Kelpeo and Patato, in order to announce the new movement and introduce the Brother. Most of the sheikhs agreed to cooperate in jihad.

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-800080**

Author: None

Title: Photographs of Fazul Abdellah Mohamed

Date: None

Length: 2 pages

Synopsis

This document contains various photographs of Fazul Abdellah Mohamed. The names Ghazi and Abdellah are also written in Arabic.

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-800081**

Author: None

Title: Kenya Airways Ticket 1

Date: 4 November 1997

Length: 2 pages

Synopsis

This is a photograph of a passenger ticket and baggage for passage on Kenya Airways for Fazul Abdalla, from Nairobi to Khartoum to Dubai to Karachi, and back to Nairobi.

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-800083**

Author: None

Title: Kenya Airways Ticket 2

Date: 3 May 1998

Length: 2 pages

Synopsis

This is a photograph of a passenger ticket and baggage for passage on Kenya Airways for Fazul Abdalla, from Khartoum to Nairobi to Moroni, Comoros on flight #321.

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-800084**

Author: Various

Title: Fazul's Travel and Educational Documents

Date: Various

Length: 17 pages

Synopsis

These are travel and educational documents for Fazul Abdallah.

Key Themes

There are a number of duplicate documents, but these are the most important.

1. Certificate from Lycee D'Etat in Moroni, Comoros, where Fazul Abdallah from 1987 to 1988.
2. A document certifying that Fazul Abdella Mohammed studied Apple Macintosh computers in 1995, and did well in the course.
3. A foreign transaction certificate issued by the Sudanese Foreign Ministry in 1995, and authenticated by the Sudanese Attorney General's office. A similar certificate appears later in the document as well.
4. A document certifying that Fazul Abdallah Mohamed Ali completed a course in English typewriting at the same time as the Apple Macintosh course.
5. An entry certificate for Fazul Abdallah Mohamed Ali from 'the second degree' cycle in the Comoros, from 1991.
6. A 'baccalaureate' graduation certificate for Fazul Abdallah Mohamed Ali from 1994.
7. A document certifying that Fazul Abdallah Mohamed Ali successfully passed an Arabic typewriting course at the same time as the Macintosh and English typewriting courses.
8. Prior to these courses, there is another document indicating that Fazul Abdul Mohamed Ali completed a course in DOS and Windows programming, and did well.

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-800086**

Author: None

Title: Student ID Card for Said Bakar

Date: 1991

Length: 2 pages

Synopsis

This document is a student ID card for Said Bakar, who is listed as being a 15 year-old student at Jamia Farooquia, Shah Faisal Colony in Karachi, Pakistan.

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-800087**

Author: None

Title: Passports of Fazul and Maimouna Mohamed Ali

Date: Various

Length: 5 pages

Synopsis

This document contains images of the passports of two citizens of the Comoros, Abdullah Mohammed Fazul, and Maimouna Mohammed Ali.

Key Themes

The first passport, for Abdullah Mohammed Fazul, shows that he was born in 1974 in Moroni, Comoros, and works as a computer engineer. He has two children, Assiya Said, and Loutfi Said, born in 1995 and 1996, respectively.

The second passport, for Maimouna Mohammed Ali, lists the holder as a student born in 1976 in Moroni, Comoros. According to the passport's stamp pages, the holder left the Comoros, and spent ten days in Tanzania before returning in August and September 1998. The numbers for both passports are the same, suggesting they are either one passport, or they are a family.

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-800088**

Author: None

Title: Somaliian Passport of Halimo Farah Abdillahi

Date: Issue 21/11/1999

Length: 5 pages

Synopsis

The document contains the passport (issued in Sana'a, Yemen in 1999) of Halimo Farah Abdillahi, a Somaliian housewife born in 1975 in Kismayo, Somalia, and currently a resident of Mogadishu, Somalia.

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-800089**

Author: None

Title: Comoros Passport of [Fazul] Abdallah Mohamed

Date: Issued

Length: 15 pages

Synopsis

This is the Comoros passport of [Fazul] Abdallah Mohammed.

Key Themes

The document is the Comoros passport of [Fazul] Abdallah Mohammed, a pupil who was born in 1972 in Moroni, Comoros. The passport was originally issued in 1990 in Moroni, and renewed in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia in 1996. Using the passport, [Fazul] Abdallah Mohammed traveled to Mauritius in 1990, to Tanzania in 1994 and 1995, to Sudan several times in 1995, to Yemen in 1995, and to Kenya in 1993 and several times in 1994 and 1995. He was also a resident of Pakistan for one year in 1991-1992 (probably longer, since he entered Pakistan in 1993 as well). Finally [Fazul] Abdallah Mohammed received visas to Djibouti and India.

Doc ID: AFGP-2002-800517

Author: Various and unknown.

Title: Zaid Barre and Events in Somalia

Date: Various.

Length: 38 pages.

Synopsis

A number of different documents are thrown together, covering 1) the Patani United Liberation Organization's fight for independence from Thailand; 2) the predicament faced by the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Oromia, and proposals by the new leadership on how to fix their problems; 3) a report analyzing the war in Somalia since the fall of Ziad Barre in 1991; 4) regulations for Ansa'ar Allah Base, and an associated security committee; and 5) a report from Yemeni border officials on a secret training mission.

Key Themes

The document consists of several collections of documents that cover different topics. They are not in order, but are arranged thematically here.

Patani United Liberation Organization (PULO)

Patani is completely different from the rest of Thailand in terms of race, language, religion and education. Its main industry is rubber production, but it is also self-sufficient in rice.

Later in the document, the PULO media unit releases a report from a Thai newspaper (13 August 1995) which claims that the Thai government discovered unexploded bombs planted by PULO. Further, the Thai military would like to classify PULO as a terrorist group, and claims that the leader of PULO, Kabir Abdul Rahman, is sick, a charge PULO disputes.

In the next section, the PULO media office in Sudan writes to the people of Sudan on the occasion of PULO's 28th anniversary. In 1993 and 1994, PULO representatives met with the Thai government, and demanded a treaty between PULO and Thailand, as well as self-determination for Patani. PULO's overall goal is an independent democratic state in Patani based on Islamic 'instructions'. The Thai Prime Minister, Banhan Salafa Aaja, rejected these demands. As a result, PULO continues to fight, and asks for the support of all freedom-loving peoples, especially Islamic nations.

Next, the PULO media unit announces that Kabir Abdul Rahman has visited the International Islamic World Organization for Human Rights and discussed the plight of the people of Patani.

In the final section of the document, Abdul Kadir Rahman writes to Abu Obaida and tries to arrange a meeting with him.

Presidential address, Islamic Front for the Liberation of Oromia

The President of the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Oromia gives a speech in he notes that the Front was established in 1969, but earlier fought slavery in 1964-1965 in Bali, Harar, and 'Arsa provinces. The Front has faced many obstacles, including the confiscation of all their weapons coming across the Red Sea, and the martyrdom of many fighters. Nevertheless, the Oromiyan people's faith has not been shaken in the face of many crimes, resulting in hope to other oppressed peoples and fear to colonizers.

The Front welcomed the fall of the Aldirgh government in Ethiopia, attended the reconciliation conference in 1991, and participated in the security and governance preparations for the transitional government. Problems arose in the implementation – the different fronts in Oromia began fighting each other over which one was the legitimate representative of the Oromiyian people. The Front and the Revolutionary Democratic Front for Ethiopian Peoples (RDFEP) began fighting, due to language problems and other misunderstandings, and tensions remain high. The proposed solution is peaceful negotiation and patience, yet while the RDFEP asked for negotiations, the Front's [previous?] leader refused, leading to war. As a result, all gains of the previous years were lost. The previous leader made decisions for his personal benefit, to the detriment of the Front. The new leadership has no objection to staying within Ethiopia provided the rights of the Oromiyian people are respected. The leadership further pledges not to engage in conflict due to religious differences, not to favor any particular area, and not to let the gains from jihad be lost.

Organizational Predicament of the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Oromia

The author describes how the Front came to be in its current predicament. The original leadership became rigid, and did not heed the opinions of others. Decisions were random and harmful to the Front as a whole, the Oromiyian people saw their dreams dashed, and the strength of the Front actually decreased. The author proposes a general representative conference to outline a political program, create a vision for the Front, and generally reform the organization.

The political program should include measures to encourage multi-party democratic practices, non-discrimination on the basis of religion or nationality, and self-determination by referendum for the Oromiyian people. The economic program would encourage light industry, improve transportation and utility infrastructure, husband natural resources, and modernize agriculture. The educational program would make most education free, establish new schools and scholarships, and encourage the use of the Oromiyian language. The social program's goals are to provide health care for Oromiyans, improve public health and nutrition, and end antiquated marriage and work practices. The national defense program would enlist all males ages 18 to 30 into the regional army. In terms of foreign policy, the Front supports peaceful resolutions to problems, welcomes helpful organizations, and encourages other peoples' self-determination.

How did the new events start in Somalia?

The author describes how Ziad Barre instigated a conflict within Mogadishu that quickly spiraled out of control. The USC was successful in driving Ziad Barre from power, but could keep control itself, and the uprising turned into a war between the rival tribes Hawi and Darood. The author concludes that this was Ziad Barre's intention all along, since he could use the violence 1) instigate a tribal war where he would come out ahead, and 2) inflict suffering on Somalia such that people will long for the days of Ziad Barre. The author argues that Ziad Barre largely succeeded.

Although the combatants might at times divide themselves into Hawi and Darood, the groups within the tribes often fight each other, and the identities themselves are but covers for hatred, prejudice, and ambition, all of which have led them away from Islam. These divisions are new and complicated – previously Somalia had been one nation, one people, one language, and one religion. The author goes into depth as to the various combatants within the Hawi and Darood parties, and explains their complexity. He decries the chaos and violence of present-day Somalia, and finds the hidden hand of Western powers, particularly the United States (whose diplomats were trained in Italy regarding Somali tribes), in the violence. The only solution is a strong Islamic central state with shari'a.

Ansa'ar Allah Base

This document lays out some of the duties involved in running this training camp and the organization in general. The security committee is responsible for the physical security of the camp, and of the personnel training within the camp, as well the mental 'security' of trainees and other personnel. This particular protection can be accomplished through the interception of hostile media, lectures, and training sessions. The security committee also engages in counterintelligence work within the organization, collects intelligence, conducts police investigations, coordinates with Islamic intelligence services (this is shelved for the present time), and takes part in covert action. The chairman of the security committee should have been a member of the organization for five years, of sound religion, and have sufficient military and security experience.

Yemen Democratic People's Republic Ministry of State Security

A 1985 letter to high-level officials in the Yemen Democratic People's Republic from Yemeni border security officials clarifies some points about a top secret training mission. The training mission involves a number of different aspects, including anti-personnel training, and anti-'military machineries' training. There was a problem with leaks from within the mission, and as a result, those in charge have taken steps to train participants on the importance of security. The group cooperated with Khubra during the training, and took a number of lectures. Unfortunately, many of the recruits had never used the weapons before, and their literacy and educational levels were extremely low. Finances were also so tight that they were forced to take out personal loans to cover costs. The authors propose that a secret training area for application and weapons training be designated, and groups trained in 1986 (the next year). They also propose to assign the leaker somewhere out of the country so as not to cause problems. Finally, they suggest storing the weapons in a secure area, and raising the salaries of the workers.

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-800573**

Author: Various

Title: Invoices for al-Qa`ida and Islamic Union Expenses

Date: 1993

Length: 14 pages

Synopsis

The document mostly consists of a large number of invoices for money spent by al-Qaeda and the Islamic Union in Somalia and Ogaden to support training, living expenses, and military operations in 1993.

Key Themes

In the first letter, Saiful-Islam writes to Brother 'Omar details how he spent the money given to him, and notes that Abu Hafs refused to send his passport because he was afraid it would be lost.

The second item is a list of budget items including food, shipping, travel, shoes, socks and personal use) in both Somalian shillings and Ethiopian bir.

The bulk of the document consists of short statements by al-Qaeda operatives or members of the Islamic Union in Somalia and Ogaden attesting to the fact that they have received money (in either bir or shillings) from the local al-Qaeda accountant (generally, but not always, Zachariah al-Maqdesi), or 'Omar Tajuddin, Commander of the Preparation Branch. 'Abdullah Irad, Commander of the Jihad Office, and 'Abdullah 'Omar, Commander of the Islamic Union, and 'Omar Tajuddin himself, were frequent recipients.

The money loaned out was used for the following activities:

1. Medical treatment for one of the brothers
2. Fuel for the rations vehicle; diesel fuel
3. Alimony for a woman
4. A brother visiting his family
5. Assisting the brothers in traveling to the Abagro River
6. Military operations and supplies on the southern, northern, northeastern, and eastern fronts, as well as in Gedo
7. Camels, both for travel and for meat
8. Shipping
9. Food and drink
10. Paying off debts

The final two items are somewhat different. The first item is a detailed budget of travel and supply expenses. The second item identifies some of the key people in budgetary operations, and who has debts in what amounts. Ahmed Karaghai is the courier who came from Addis Ababa. Ahmed Diri Sheikh Rasheed and Mohammed 'Atya are in charge of purchasing. 'Abd Al-Salam 'Othman took \$5000 from Djibouti without permission.

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-800581**

Author: Abu 'Ata Al-Sharqi

Title: Abu 'Ata Al-Sharqi Reports from Afghanistan

Date: September 4, 1994

Length: 3 pages

Synopsis

Abu 'Ata Al-Sharqi reports in a letter the situation before he and other al-Qaeda operatives leave Afghanistan. He expresses satisfaction that Fayez Muhammad is experiencing problems after causing al-Qaeda hardship in some way, and asks to be allowed to finish the Furqan project by training a group of Uzbeks before he leaves Afghanistan for Sudan.

Key Themes

Al-Sharqi acknowledges the order to evacuate Afghanistan, and thinks the order is for the best. He is sorry to leave, regarding Afghanistan as a paradise, with ample opportunities to see the fruits of their labors (comparable to Sudan), but also as a place with difficult conditions.

Three recent incidents have made Al-Sharqi happy:

1. The Vice President of Al-Jama't Al-Islamiyah visited Al-Badr Camp, and agreed with Al-Sharqi and his associates that "such incidents" should not happen, nor is this the way they should communicate. He would go to Al-Ghond himself to resolve the situation.
2. Al-Sharqi and his associates visited Kabul and Hikmetyar's headquarters to deny that al-Qaeda had given any weapons to Massoud (it had actually gone to Al-Nahda party), and to discuss their problem with Al-Ghond. Hikmetyar's people agreed that Fayez Muhammad (apparently the person behind the "incident") was corrupt, and might have to be killed.
3. Fayez Muhammad was protecting fellow Manakel tribe members built houses in violation of the government of Khost's regulations, but backed down in the face of the government's threats to attack Matoon citadel and kick the party out of Khost.

Al-Sharqi expresses his satisfaction that Fayez Muhammad is experiencing such misfortune in light of what he did to them.

The Al-Qaeda operatives' mission was to help with the Furqan project. Previously, they had trained a class of Tajiks at al-Farouq camp, and had the opportunity to train Uzbeks as well. Abu Walid, an associate of Al-Sharqi, is strongly in favor of training the Uzbeks since the opportunity may not arise again. Eventually, they agree to do it as long as the Uzbeks arrive within two months, pending a decision from the al-Qaeda leadership, which Al-Sharqi asks for. He asks the recipient of the leader to prepare a stand or cart for him (for business) in Khartoum in anticipation of his arrival there.

Doc ID: AFGP-2002-800597

Author: Abu Hafess (probably Abu Hafs AKA Muhammad Atef)

Title: Abu Hafs' Report on Operations in Somalia

Date: Unknown

Length: 9 pages

Synopsis

Abu Hafs submits a report on the al-Qaeda operations in Somalia, Ogaden, Kenya, and Djibouti, and lists budget needs. Luuq camp has a great location, but is short on many supplies. The situation in the Ogaden, currently under the purview of Saif al-Islam, is going well, but needs money. The Kenya office is has a central logistical and administrative function, but suffers from security problems. Finally, the Djibouti office needs a married operative who will not be corrupted.

Key Themes

Abu Hafs rejects doing Brother Anass's courses in the areas he visited for security, and suggests Khartoum instead. He then gives code words the recipients of the report should use for Sudan and Somalia, and the times and days that certain frequencies can be used to contact him via wireless communications.

The next section is a detailed description of Luuq Camp. The camp's location is good for using as a springboard for guerrilla warfare, since the mountainous terrain makes it hard for outside forces to penetrate, especially during the rainy season, when the camouflage is thicker. Marehan tribes (the tribe of Seyad Barre) live in the area, but the actual area around the camp is sparsely populated, and many of the people are supporters of the Islamic Union. Abu Hafs rates the security situation as good, and military supplies are mostly good, with the exception of clothing, shoes, canteens, RPGs, ammunition for artillery, and vehicles (two cars are needed, if possible). As for the training, it is going well, especially given the horrible condition many of the recruits were in at the beginning. Trainers are needed.

Abu Hafs met with Professor Mahmood, and it became clear to him that the coalition in Luuq lacks decision-making ability, and defers to the central authority, which is non-confrontational in incidents with the Americans and Kenya. Abu Hafs senses this may be a problem in the future.

Regarding communications, Abu Hafs triumphantly notes that Saif in Ogaden, and Omar in Laascaanood (of the "Sudanese Agricultural Equipment Division") were contacted using a "faraway-communications wireless system." It will be cheaper than phones, but requires codes. The group still needs devices with repeaters, and several high frequency devices, although it is unclear how they will transport the devices to the needy areas.

The goal of the brothers in Luuq is two-fold: to form a guerrilla force, and to discover and collect information on the enemy for use in the future.

Abu Hafs then goes on to describe the situation in the Ogaden. He notes that he was able to make contact with Saif. Saif is doing well, prior reports that the Ogaden camp was surrounded are untrue, and he is desperate need of money. Abu Hafs wants to go to Ogaden, probably via the Luuq route, and met with Sheikh Saley and Sheikh Abdellah Omar, where he encouraged them with the group's logo: "Make me achieve my earnings under the shadow of my arrow."

Abu Hafs continues with a discussion of the Kenya office. The purpose of the Nairobi office (which is in a rented house) is to receive, prepare, equip, and supply brothers going to the camps in Luuq or Ogaden. The actual cost of transporting people from Nairobi to Luuq is high. The security situation is poor – crime is high, and the political situation is unstable, possibly even explosive. Furthermore, Arabs in particular are subject to extreme surveillance.

Djibouti has an al-Qaeda operative in the form of Brother Khaled, but he must be removed immediately because he is susceptible to Djibouti's corruption as a single male, and replaced with Abu Ahmed Al-Radji, who is married.

Abu Hafs then lists the fixed budget for the Kenya/Luuq operations, and mentions that Brother Khaled is \$4000 in debt. The trainers would also like good salaries as they would like to get married, and low salaries would apparently present obstacles to doing that.

Finally, Abu Hafs met with Abu Khadija al-Zahri, and confirmed that the evacuation of Laasqoray was not about a lack of food after all.

Doc ID: AFGP-2002-800600

Title: Report on the Needs of the Mujahidin in Somalia

Author: Unknown

Date: February 19, 1993

Length: 3 pages

Synopsis

A letter to Ottman or Abu Baqar that details the current needs of the mujahidin in Somalia, and negatively assesses the personality of the Islamic youth, the current state of jihad and the leadership of the local jihad movement.

Key Themes

The first section is a list of requested items, with costs, for the mujahidin: Kalashinovs, BKMs, and RPGs, as well as rice, dates, and semolina. The leader also requests five open-backed Toyota Land Cruisers, communications devices,

The author then negatively assesses the youth involved in the movement. They are rash, shallow, have no preparation, and foolishly rushed into the city.

The author divides the fight in the Mogadishu and Luuq regions into at least three steps. The first step is unintelligible. The second period [but not step] involves attacking the leaders of the tribes, hopefully by finding some way of turning tribal allies (presumably of al-Qaeda) against other members of their tribes. This will likely be difficult. The second step [but not period] consists of fighting from within the cities, using different types of cells – ambushes, light arms, hand guns, explosives, etc. The third step is quick occupation of the cities by special forces in case the Americans leave, after which the group's forces will target Somali authorities and tribal leaders. The author doubts that the Americans will ever leave.

After much unintelligible writing, the author assesses the state of the jihad movement and its leadership. The leadership is terrible, and the author does not expect this to change, even with the new shura council. He suggests entering the political arena themselves, connecting with the base, and preparing some youth groups in the face of the poor leadership. The brothers have good intentions, including assassinations, and training in the cities, but they need encouragement. These brothers have an extremely low opinion of the leadership, blame it for the failure of jihad, and are threatening to leave the movement.

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-800611**

Author: Hassan Dahir Haji Aweis

Title: Hassan Aweys Kenya Visa Application

Date: 9 March 1993

Length: 2 pages

Synopsis

The document is a Kenyan visa application, dated 9 March 1993, filled out by Hassan Daih Haji Aweis. The author describes himself as a Somalian merchant, born in 1944 in Dimaree, and currently resident in Mogadishu, with a passport issued by the Internal Ministry of Somalia in 1990. He intends to visit the Tanfeeq Trading Company in Nairobi on business for a month's duration.

Doc ID: AFGP-2002-800621

Author: Various and unknown

Title: Letters on al-Qa'ida's Operations in Africa

Length: 6 pages

Date: 1993

Synopsis

A series of letters from various authors that discuss al-Qaeda's operations in Africa, specifically Somalia and Ogaden. In the first and fourth letters, the authors discuss their failure to get from Nairobi to Luuq and Mendira. The author of the third letter offers his help with African travel document. In the second letter, the author negatively assesses the current state of the Islamic Movement in Somalia, and in the fifth letter, Saif al-Islam gives a status report on his efforts in Ghar Shaigut camp.

Key Themes

The first letter, to Abu AbdAllah, is a report of an operative's arrival and activities in Nairobi in support of al-Qaeda's operations in Somalia and Ogaden [Ugadin]. The trip itself was expensive, and the author delivered \$2500 to Abu Tariq, who handled expenses and logistics. The al-Qaeda team met with Ugadin allies, and tried and failed to get to Mendira or Luuq, Somalia via plane – it was stymied by government regulations and inappropriate facilities in Luuq.

The second letter is a report of the state and history of the Islamic movement in Somalia. In southern Somalia, Algamaa Al-Islamiah, led by Mahmud Isa, broke off from al-Ahl, led by Abdelqadir Shaikh Edris. In the north, the Islamic Youth Group. The structure of the Islamic movement mirrors that of the Muslim brotherhood, with national and local executive councils and advisory councils, although many decisions are made in the mosques and streets. The Afghan Jihad-influenced youth of the movement rose up to defend Kismayo from Aideed's advancing forces, but were defeated, and driven back. The author blames the movement for bad planning and preparation, little money, and little connection between the leaders and the base.

The third letter is from Abu Abd-Allah Althani Alfa Ibrahim to Abi Ab-Allah Saad Alsaad. The author regrets that circumstances prevent him from making a trip to Africa, but since he's free at the moment, he would be happy to help African brothers obtain documents from Guinea, Liberia, Ivory Coast, or Sierra Leone.

The fourth letter, to Abu Abd-Allah, is similar to the first letter in describing the failure to get to Luuq or Mendira. The author provides intelligence on the movement of US forces to meet with Somali leaders in Luuq, and lists concerns he has about the operation, such as the airport, time for more training, establishing more training center, and relations and coordination with the Ugadin tribes, as well as other operatives.

In the fifth letter, dated 19 March 1993, Saif al-Islam, the main al-Qaeda operative in Ugadin, writes to Brother Othman, and describes the situation in Ghar Shaighut, the training camp he helped to establish. Camp resources are low, food, weapons and ammunition must be purchased in nearby villages, and the brothers are weak. Nonetheless, Saif al-Islam judges the time good to collect weapons and train as the enemy is weak and non-confrontational. The local allies (under Abd al-Salam Othman Abd al-Salam) are in charge of political, administrating and daawi operations, but al-Qaeda has assumed responsibility for training. Saif al-Islam ends with a discussion of the monetary needs of the local allies, and puts forward

with his estimated required budget, which totals \$64000 for three months' supply of the camp force alone, and \$130,000 per month for 600 people to be trained.

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-800639**

Title: A Quick Review of the Current Political Situation

Author: Unknown

Date: Unknown

Length: 4 pages

Synopsis

The author discusses Aideed's ascendancy in Somali, attacks against the US and UN, and the situation among the brothers in other regions in the Horn of Africa.

Key Themes

The author writes to Abu Abdalla, Abu Obaida, and unnamed others, and gives a situation report for operations in the Horn of Africa, particularly Somalia.

Aideed has large amounts of support in the region. The Ali Mahdi coalition is thinking of allying with him, while the main opposition coalition is fracturing. The UN, for its part, has moved out of Mogadishu in order to support anti-Aideed factions via money and humanitarian aid. Even so, Aideed has become a hero to those looking for an effective leader, and he can overcome opposition in Mogadishu and Kemayo. As for Islamic Unity, they are apparently requesting people in Jeddo, and continue training in Mogadishu.

After a missing page, the document picks up with a list of attacks in Somalia. American and UN forces have suffered a number of casualties due to attacks. The Americans are afraid, and asked Aideed's forces to investigate, but Aideed denies any wrongdoing. Aideed's group called Sheikh Abdulla Sahal, threatened his followers, and began looking for the brothers in order to stop the attacks. There will be a discussion about security even though there are only five brothers, led by Abu Ahamd Al Masri.

As for Dubli, Saif is trying to get there to assess the situation. The brothers tried only one failed RPG attack against a UN helicopter. In Ojadeen, the brothers have arrived safely. Sheikh Abdulla Omar asked for engineers, but none are available right now. There is nothing new to report in Jeddo.

Doc ID: AFGP-2002-800640

Author: Omar Taj Al Dein Bin Abdullah "Abu Belal" and others

Title: Abu Belal's Report on Jihad in Somalia

Date: Unknown

Length: 10 pages

Synopsis

Omar Taj Al Dein Bin Abdullah "Abu Belal" and possibly others describe the jihad situation in Somalia, an ambush against allied forces, the problems faced by the local movements, and what is needed for jihad.

Key Themes

The first section of the document appears to be a highly fragmented letter from Omar Taj Al Dein Bin Abdullah "Abu Belal" and possibly others describing the jihad situation in Somalia, and updating the recipient on the organization's activities.

Jihad in Somalia was started by the youth without any planning or coordination, against the advice of shura councils outside of Somalia. America is getting closer, and there is a danger of the money being misspent. Now is not the time for jihad, but for da'wa (proselytization). Each member of the movement is still too attached to his tribe rather than Islam. As a result, the Executive Council should participate, and military operations need to be planned. Military forces are apparently not up to standards, and information is spotty. 'Abdu Rahman in Djibouti is mentioned several times as being involved.

The next several pages describe a battle. The author was in a caravan that stopped in a potentially hostile area against his advice. The enemy then ambushed them, and the author (called "Muhammad" by one of the soldiers) took charge. The ambushed forces successfully prevented the enemy from encircling them, cut off the enemy's routes, and deployed an anti-tank force to protect them [the author provides a map]. Eleven 'Muslims' and about fifty enemy soldiers died. The author's allies want to return by the same way they had come, but the author told them not to make the same mistake twice. Instead, they returned a different way, and faced a confrontation with local Somalis that failed to escalate.

The author mentions that he is sending Abu Salman with more details, and asks for money for expenses. He proposes setting up a company in (Baru?) region to support operations in Ogaden. Preferably the office will be led by a Somali, and will not cost too much. It is possible to buy very cheap weapons. The author also mentions a split among the ranks of the Al-Wadi Company [probably a specific jihad group], Al-Cabal Company, and Al-Ittihad Company.

There are a number of positive aspects of the Al-Sharika movement, notably the large numbers of members, and the mutual respect the members have, but they need to organize military forces, and representative councils. In terms of negative aspects, the movement is not prepared for jihad. In terms of willingness to engage in jihad, ability to gain the support of the Somali people, ability to train young people, and authority of the leaders, the movement is still lacking. In general, the movement's leaders have not successfully coordinated jihad, da'wa, and other religious work, do not court outside opinions when necessary, and simultaneously seem to have no desire for jihad, yet a certain amount of impatience and agitation.

Finally, the author wants to know about the disposition of the enemy, both external, and internal groups that are against a foreign presence.

The last section is possibly unrelated to the beginning of the document. A number of tribes would like to regain authority from the Hawi tribe. There is only one Muslim group in the area. It has a camp in "Bu Saso" where brothers who left Afghanistan train recruits. There are also a large number of Muslim youths in Mogadishu belonging to a number of different movements. The 'brotherhood' and Al-Ittihad apparently have camps in the city itself. The author asks for mujahidin brothers to supervise the intellectual aspects of the movements, and a coordination and communication center that will connect and strengthen the youths, and the unity of the people in order to carry out jihad.

Northern Somalia is controlled by the Somali National Movement, which refuses to join the rest of Somalia. There are two Islamic movements, the Islamic Union, and the Unity movement, but neither has been able to establish camps.

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-800641**

Title: "Political Difficulties that Face the Organizations Representing Islamic Nationalists in Ethiopia" and "Brief Report on Current Events in Ethiopia"

Author: Unknown

Date: Unknown

Length: 7 pages

NB: The pages in the document are not in order. The document itself is translated poorly, and is incomplete.

Synopsis

The author describes the previous problems, the current challenges, and the future opportunities for Muslims and the organizations posed by the transitional government in Ethiopia.

Key Themes

The current regime in power in Ethiopia (Al Dargh) has some flexibility, and provides more political opportunities to Muslim nationalities in Ethiopia than previous regimes did. Unfortunately, Muslim nationalist organizations were often not in a position to take advantage of these opportunities. The population was in many cases stopped from economic production, and discriminated against for opportunities (which were given to non-Muslim organizations). In addition conflict was increased among different nationalities, journalists' opportunities were limited, and education and organizational opportunities were curtailed after the author's organization moved in.

With that said, opportunities for Muslim now exist.

1. Muslim nationalists were able to take control of their own areas.
2. Some Muslim nationalist organizations were able to return and contact their populations.
3. International Islamic organizations were allowed into Ethiopia.
4. Muslims are enthusiastic.
5. The youth of Ethiopia are eager to hear about Islam.

The author makes seven suggestions to improve the situation of Muslim organizations in Ethiopia:

1. Conducting a study of the reasons for the weakening of Muslim nationalists.
2. Having an urgent meeting among the region's group to resolve problems.
3. Taking advantage of the opportunities for political participation offered by the transitional government.
4. Providing the political and financial knowledge to take advantage of the opportunities, given a three month time limit.
5. Raising the leadership standards of the Islamic organizations.
6. Pressuring the president of the Islamic front to accept the opportunities.

Elsewhere, the author makes more detailed suggestions.

1. Conduct a conference to deal with the Islamic front's internal divisions.
2. Try to find unity among the various factions.
3. Try to coordinate among Somali and Oromi organizations to confront Islam's enemies.
4. Take advantage of current opportunities by acknowledging that the Christians of Ethiopia are merely a ship floating in a sea of the rising Muslim population, establishing political parties that represent all Muslims, and financially supporting media outlets to prepare Muslim psychologically.
5. Resolve problems with the transitional government to avoid war.

6. Raise the economic and educational level of local Muslims.

The author also provides a report on current events in Ethiopia. He expresses astonishment that the Ethiopian government was previously overthrown by such puny means. The new transitional government's extension of opportunities to Muslims, namely the right to rule themselves, participate in the government, and broadcast their own media, is welcome, but it is ultimately a deceptive plot.

The author describes Islamic nationalities in Ethiopia, including the Oromo (who have 3 Islamic organizations, and 2 non-Muslim ones), the Ofar, Somalis, the Bani Shangool, and the Adra.

Expected dangers involve a betrayal by non-Muslims, who could deprive Muslim organizations of their military and political gains following the elections if they choose military confrontation.

Doc ID: **AFGP-2003-001293H**

Author: Al-Wali

Title: Meeting Notes and a Letter from Al-Wali

Date: Unknown

Length: 1 page

Synopsis

The document consists of notes or the agenda from a meeting on the situation in the Horn of Africa, and a letter from Al-Wali on training.

Key Themes

The first part of the document appears to be either notes from a meeting, or the agenda for a meeting. The meeting apparently revolves around the relationship with Sheik Hassan, the military situation in Kismayo, the disposition of al-Qaeda operatives in the region, especially Ogaden.

In the section part, Al-Wali writes a letter to Maurib, in which he suggests to Maurib that he arrange for two hours off every day for training for the Arab brothers. Yusif Jan Muhammad Ahmed is never to compete with the Afghans, although training is fine.

Doc ID: ISGQ-2005-00024493

Author: Unknown

Title: Iraqi Intelligence Service reports on Al-Qa`ida Threats in Djibouti

Date: September-October 2001

Length: 8 pages

Synopsis

The Djibouti station of the Iraqi Intelligence Service reports on threats by Al-Qaeda to blow up foreign companies in Djibouti, and on the activities of Islamist groups in Djibouti and Somaliland.

Key Themes

23 August 2001 – This is the report indicating that Al-Qaeda has made threats against foreign companies (some of which contain Jewish members) for cooperating with the US.

25 August 2001 -- Al-Qaeda has delivered messages in Arabic and French, signed by Osama bin Laden, that threaten to blow up certain foreign companies in Djibouti at the end of August unless they cease cooperating with the US. In response, the French military has increased its security around its military hospital, and air and naval bases, and the US embassy has built fortifications. The Djibouti government is concerned about the blow to investment that such threats could entail.

1 September 2001 – The previous report is reiterated in a slightly different form.

6 September 2001 -- The Iraqi Intelligence Service (IIS) orders the Djibouti station to follow up on certain reports.

25 October 2001 – The Djibouti station responds. The Al-Tabligh and Al-Da'wah groups are active in Djibouti – twelve members were arrested, but were released for lack of evidence. According to the Libyan Charge d'Affaires, most of the members of the groups' cell, which is headquartered at 'Uthman bin 'Affan mosque in Djibouti and led by Ahmad Tahir 'Umar, are Arabs. The Libyan government is monitoring the group due to the presence of Libyans. There is a camp in Ber'u in Somaliland where Arabs of various nationalities (but no Iraqis) receive 'professional' training in weapons and forgery. The camp is run by the Al-Qaeda-related Al-Jihad Organization, headed by Ibrahim Hasan Sultan.